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D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
NEW YORK

1907

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CHAPTER I

THE MAN WHO MAKES THE STUFF

THE manager of a large wholesale house sat in his office. He had started to rustle for himself at the age of twelve in a little country store. By hard work he had made himself the acting head of a large wholesale firm and held in the vault a big slice of the company's stock, juicy in dividends.

When he had to quit school and go to work he was just beginning the third part of arithmetic and a simple volume of United States history. He would have had a much larger slice of the firm's stock had he not

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been a disbeliever in race suicide and had he not felt that all of his seven sons should have a university education and training for some profession.

As the old man read his mail, his youngest son, John, who only that morning had returned from nine months at the university, came into his office. The old man was fond of his children, and especially loved his youngest son. Although a man of business, the veteran was genial in his make-up; he was democratic; he felt himself as good as a supreme court judge and no better than the elevator boy.

John was togged in the latest fashion—on each foot a shoe the shape of half a yacht; trousers freshly creased and rolled up at the bottom; straw hat, the band of which emblazoned his Greek-letter fraternity colors. In one of his gloved hands he carried a walking stick—in the other, his Ph.B. degree he had just got at Harvard. The old man was

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so glad to see John that he hugged him when he came into the office.

“ Well, you’ve got your degree, John? ”

“ Yes, father; here it is. I’ll show it to you.”

John took an initialed silver cigarette case out of his pocket, lit a coffin nail with a wax match, and, slipping the bowknot of the blue ribbon tied around his degree, rolled his sheepskin out upon the old man’s desk.

“ H’m — h’m — you finally got it, John. Read it to me.”

John began mumbling over the Latin words on the Ph.B. degree, coming soon to his own name, “ Joannis Carolus Witherspoon.”

“ Oh, hold on there with that stuff, John— this Joannis Carolus business; give me the John Charley of it! I want you to talk to your old dad in the straight American language. I don’t know anything about that stuff.”

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Then Joannis began to stammer over his translation of his Latin sheepskin. He made such a botched job of it that the old man soon blurted out:

“Well, never mind what it is just so long as you’ve got it.” Then, like a business man, having brought one deal to a head, the old man started in on another and turned to Joannis with the remark:

“Well, now, look here, John; you are a man now. You are twenty-one years old and have this here degree—what are you going to do?”

“Well, after I have my vacation, father——”

“Vacation, hell! You haven’t had anything but vacation since you were born and you haven’t given a vacation to your mother and me since I used to walk you nights to keep you from howling. Now, you’ve been through school and got what you wanted—you know I was kind of half a mind not to

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give you this last four years anyhow—now, what are you going to *do* ? ”

“ Well, father, I don’t know just exactly, but I thought I’d like to take a post-graduate course and get a Ph.D. You see I have only a Ph.B.”

“ Ph.D., umph? Well, there’s only one letter between B and D—don’t you think you’ve gone about far enough? As it is, you can’t read the one you have. What’s the use of getting another? ”

“ Well, you see, father, the Ph.B. nowadays is just sort of a starter. You must have the Ph.D.—that is, a Doctor of Philosophy degree, the Ph.B. is only a Bachelor of Philosophy degree—before a college man will recognize you as having done anything.”

“ College nothing! What do I care about what college men think of you? They aren’t going to support you. Why, the poor beggars hardly get enough to eat. I’ve been out to receptions with them myself—one

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night a couple of young professors got their hands against some fresh paint before they came into the house where the reception was. When they took off their spiked tail coats and rolled up their sleeves, why, confound it! although it was twenty-two degrees below zero, those fellows were wearing minnow-seine underwear. I don't care what a man, who can't wear flannel next to his hide when snow is on the ground, thinks of you. I want you to have a stand-in with the substantial men of the country.

“Now, I tell you, son—you've spent eight years in the grade schools, four years in the high school, had a special tutor for another year to get you ready, and have put in four years in the university. Of course this is all right. You aren't spoiled yet and if you have your head set to it good and hard to take up a profession after a while, all very well and good! But look ahere—I am just right now sending away—yes, see these checks—a hun-

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dred dollars each to two of your brothers. One of them has been practicing law for four years and *Doctor Witherspoon* has had his sign out for over two years. They're both writing to the old man to send them money to pay their house rent. The only ones I don't have to put up for right along now are Ned, who took up electricity, and Sam that's a mining engineer—and neither one of them right now is making as much as my average traveling salesman.

“Of course, I say, if you want to become a professional man, that's all right. But, I'll tell you, son, the lawyers and doctors get only a few grains of corn that fall through the cracks; the business man owns the crib, full of ears. I've kind of got this professional man idea out of my head. I had it good and hard when your older brothers were growing up—but if you want to do something of that kind, that's all very well and good; but, do you know, I've kind of got it into my head

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that *a business man is a professional man*. Why, my buyer here in the silk department must know a whole lot of things—technical things at that, too—and I don't see why he's not just as much a professional man as the fellow that yanks a tooth out of your head. Why, my traveling salesmen are professional men. They have to study their business. It has cost me a good deal of money to find out that the young fellow starting out on the road has a whole lot to learn.

“ Now, maybe you'd like to take up a profession that none of your brothers have stooped to and become a business man. Of course I say that if you wish to do any of these other things and don't agree with me, you shall have that liberty and I'll spend a thousand a year on you for four years more. But, before you do that, I'm going to have my say for just a little while. I want you to spend at least one year in the school that I've been going to for half a century. I want

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you to put in a little study in my college—the University of Hustle.

“ It seems to me that this so-called higher education, which is little more or less than the reading of good books, should be the pleasure, picked up in leisure hours, of the business man. Why, I’ve seen one of my friends here in Chicago get into a talk with a lot of professors on subjects of history, religion, philosophy, and literature and nearly skin them in an argument; and I’m shot if I don’t believe he has a better ‘education,’ as you call it, than any professor I ever met.

“ ‘ Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.’

“ But here! This is Monday morning and two days’ mail to go through. You run along out now and see your mother. You can take one day’s vacation with her, but to-morrow morning you show up here with me at eight

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o'clock. One of my traveling men has just told me that the young man who packs his trunks has got wise and is going to go out on the road on his own hook for another house. He needs a good, live boy to help him along, and I guess I'll just turn you over to him for a few trips."

Joannis Carolus started in on his post-graduate course by making a trip down to New York with his father's dress-goods salesman, Watkins. This salesman, at the request of the old man, was going to New York to offer suggestions to the buyer of his line.

One evening Watkins, Joannis Carolus, and the dry-goods buyer sat with a group of manufacturers and salesmen in the roof garden of the New Astoria. They looked down Broadway at the glittering lights which shone between the great skyscraping monuments of commerce. The scent of the geraniums that fringed the roof garden, the green climbing

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vines, and the cakewalk played by the red-coated Hungarian band kept the little party of business men quiet for a while; but after a bit they forgot the glittering lights, the music, and the flowers and began to talk of business. Although he did not know it, this was the first lecture in a new course for Joannis Carolus.

“This is a great age for faking,” said a cloth manufacturer. “People somehow want to be humbugged. Quality doesn’t cut much ice any more. The whole thing is appearance, not what anything really is. In my business I find that the whole thing is going to cotton-backs instead of all-wools. What does a man who wears a suit of clothes know about cloth anyway? You can just as well gouge him as not and make more profit while you have the chance. Why, it’s getting so that the cloth manufacturers who buy from me are handling more and more of this class of stuff and less and less of substantial, well-

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made goods." The man who spoke was one of those manufacturers who had inherited a reputable business from his father and one who had made no progress. Nor did the firms that used his cloth in comparatively large quantities amount to very much.

"No, I don't agree with you for a minute," broke out Watkins. He was a man who had bucked up against the retail trade, retail merchants who see all kinds of goods go onto the backs of their customers and who are the first ones to hear of kicks when the stuff they sell is poor. "No, sir; I can't stand for that for a second. While there is a great deal of faking done nowadays, I don't believe in it. The man who makes good stuff is the man who will make more stuff. He is the man who will build a business that will expand right along.

"You saw, I am sure, the big restaurant out near the World's Fair Grounds in St. Louis—the restaurant owned by a darky?

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Well, sir! I used to know that fellow years ago in Tecumseh, Nebraska. Out there we used to call him 'Ham Sandwich Joe.' Heavens! what a good fried ham sandwich Joe could make! I used to get into Tecumseh on the midnight Cannon Ball. I remember one morning, when the Cannon Ball was late; it was about half past three in the morning when the coach stopped at the depot. Cold? Whew! I never struck a place where it gets as cold as it does in Nebraska. The snow-flakes, it seems to me, start at the Canadian border and go on a bee line for Pensacola, Florida. They are all about head high and flying fast when they sweep southward across Nebraska. There wasn't any bus at the depot on this blizzardy morning that I am telling you about and I had to lug my two heavy grips about four blocks up to the hotel. I'd gone but a very short distance when I caught a whiff of fried ham. Hungry? Did you ever smell fried ham when you were

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right good and empty? When I smelled that meat a-frying my appetite fell against a razor strop, and it was sharp enough to split a strand of a spider's web by the time I reached Black Joe's shanty.

"I had never been in his place before. It was about a block from the hotel. As I climbed up on the stool Joe asked me, 'Mawnin, Cun'l; what can I do foh you, suh?' A brakeman who sat near remarked: 'If you want something really good, you just get Joe to make you one of his fried ham sandwiches—with a bun.'

" 'All right, I'll take your tip, old man,' said I, and asked Joe to make me one. My mouth watered like a sugar maple in sap season, while the ham was in the skillet. Joe sliced a bun in two and warmed it up a little as the ham sputtered. Talk about something good! I've never had anything in my life as good as that ham sandwich. That was seventeen years ago, but whenever I

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think about it, to this day, I can taste it again.

“After I’d eaten three sandwiches, a whole apple pie—and Joe could make an apple pie with nutmeg in it just as good as he could sandwiches—and had drunk a pitcher of sweet milk, I asked Joe how it was that he made the sandwich so good.

“ ‘Well, Cun’l, I’ll tell you, suh. De fust t’ing dat am nec’sary to de makin’ of a sandwich am to have good ham. Now, dis yere ham I has spesh’ly cured foh me down in ole Kentucky, by my ole mammy. It hangs in de smoke house many an’ many a night, an’ she burns sassafras bushes under it. Dat’s one of de t’ings what makes de flavor. Yes, suh; de fust t’ing I have am good ham—an’ den dis yere bread—dat I makes myse’f. You see, I jes’ takes a little piece ob de dough from one mixin’ and holds hit over till de next time. Dat makes de buns rise good and gives ’em dat flavor. You can’t make

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nothin' good, Cun'l, unless you make it outen good stuff.'

"Now, sir, do you know," said Watkins, turning to the cloth maker, "this Black Joe I'm telling you about told me how he started in that little town and afterwards went to Lincoln, Nebraska, and then to Kansas City, and then to St. Louis, and how he, a negro who couldn't read or write, had made a snug little fortune. He built up his business by *making good stuff*."

"Well, that may be all right," persisted the cloth manufacturer, "for ham sandwiches, but it won't do in business."

"There I don't agree with you," said a retail shoe merchant. "You know my business is one in which you can tell quicker than in most any other whether or not the material is good. A shoe must stand hard wear. Now, I've been buying shoes for twenty-five years and I've finally got my business placed with just a few houses. I've cut

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out a good many of them because I've found out by experience that a great many of them did not hold up their stuff. I've had lots of manufacturers in my day use good stuff when I first began to deal with them and make lasts that were good-lookers. They would keep up the appearance of the shoes they made, but, little by little, cut the quality of the stock so much that finally I have had to drop them out.

"Now, you see, there are a whole lot of people in business who think they are doing well if they can hold the same volume of business from year to year. Now, I contend that a man is not making a success in his business unless he is making his business grow. The factory that makes the principal line I carry was almost nothing when I began to do business with it. The head of the establishment used to be a mere cobbler out in Colorado. The old man, when I meet him now, enjoys telling a good story on himself.

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His firm, which is now stocked for two millions, has big retail stores all over the United States. One of them is located in Denver.

“ ‘One day,’ said the old gentleman, when I saw him last, ‘I met an old miner in my Denver store. He came up and shook hands with me and asked me if I knew him. I said that his face looked familiar but I couldn’t quite place him. “Don’t you remember that pair of boots you made for me up here in Golden?” he asked. “You charged me sixteen dollars for them, but they were bully good boots. I kicked on the price when I got them, but I never had a kick coming on the boots.’ ”

“Well, sir, that man saved a few hundred dollars in that little town and went down to Boston to make shoes. When I was talking to him the other day he said, ‘I know what a good piece of leather is. I learned that at the bench and I’ve always made it a rule above all things else to put good leather into

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my shoes and, to be sure, I've always had them made by the very best workmen I could get.'

"Now that, gentlemen, is why this man has built up a shoe business of over six million a year."

"Yes, that may be all right," argued the cloth manufacturer, "but what are we going to do for all of these people who don't have much money and who must have something cheap?"

"Well, there's a great big mistake there," continued the shoe man. "Retail merchants and clerks think that people want something cheap. They don't. They want something good. They buy stuff that is cheap only because they think they haven't money enough to buy something good. Now, I want to ask you, is it not better for a man to have one pair of shoes made out of a piece of leather that will give him a year's service than to have two pairs of shoes made out of that

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same piece of leather split in two, as they do it nowadays, which will not last him more than six weeks a pair? This is the kind of manufacturing that is done a great deal to-day. Too many are striving to make something cheap instead of making something good. You can look at all of the very large concerns in this country and you will find them to be reputable concerns that are manufacturing good goods."

"Now, another way that a man can build a business," said a manufacturer of specialties, "is by making something different from what the other fellow makes—something unique and original. I remember when I was a boy away down in Kentucky that an old man named Gray used to bring ginger cake and cider and watermelons into town on election day and draw up his wagon on the shady side of the public square. There was a kind of a flavor to that ginger cake and a sort of sweet glaze made out of brown sugar over

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the top of it that no other ginger cake had, and he always tapped a barrel of cider that would bubble on your tongue when you first tasted it. It was just naturally good rich cider made out of crab apples. Nobody else in the country had trees that bore such good fruit as old man Gray's did. Nobody else had such good cider. When you drank the other fellow's cider the roof of your mouth reminded you of a cankered brass kettle. It was a prohibition town and, save when the moonshine man came along boot-legging out his forty-rod, the boys who were inclined never got anything to drink that would make them want to vote for Andy Jackson. This cider was just soft enough to keep the constable off and just hard enough to help old man Gray do a land-office business. In short, he had made something that the other fellow could not make and something that his neighbors wanted to buy. He had planted those crab-apple trees when he was a boy and kept

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the sassafras sprouts from growing around their roots. His neighbors could have done the same thing if they had begun early enough and worked as hard.

"I'll tell you, these people who are making things nowadays must always keep grubbing up sassafras sprouts, and if a man can, let him try to make something for the market that the other fellow can't produce."

"Yes, you're right about that," chimed in the hatter. "In my line of business there are scores and scores of people making hats. Of course there are a *few*," and here the master hat maker smiled with satisfaction, "who make stuff in my line better than others do, but still no one of them has any very great advantage over the other. But in some lines it's different. Just look at these incandescent electric light globes, for instance. The company that makes these has a cinch. Edison had an idea. He worked out this idea and put it into practice."

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“Yes, and I’ll tell you another thing,” spoke up the shoe merchant; “he hit onto a thing that fits into the needs of a lot of people. If a man has a corner on canary bird food he can’t do as much business as if he were to have a grip on all the wheat that grows. Everybody eats bread, but only a few women buy birdseed.”

“But,” began the silk buyer, “whenever there’s anything like making bread, where it’s very plain to any mind that there will be a demand for it, you will always find a whole lot of people going into that business. It is a great deal better to start up something on your own hook that nobody else has, than it is to start in on something that everybody is using and go into competition with others. Why, there’s a firm out in Chicago that’s doing a business of nearly half a million dollars a year—and what do you suppose that business is? They are making a preparation which is said to take the kinks out of negroes’

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hair. Who would think that a business like that would amount to anything? Still, that firm's cleaning up bushels of money each year. Of course, there's an element of flimflam in the business. That stuff will straighten out the kinks all right, but after a week or two they will come back in again."

"That is a good thing for any business," exclaimed the hat manufacturer. "It makes a continuous demand."

"Yes, you're right about that," continued the silk buyer, "but it would be better still to make something that will last and give permanent satisfaction and meets a genuine demand on the part of the general public."

"Now, I know of a man who used to be a clerk in a grocery store out in Kansas. He had saved up about a hundred dollars when a stranded book agent struck his town and unloaded on him a hundred dollars' worth of cook books. The agent pictured in glowing terms the amount of money this grocery clerk

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could make out of the book business, at which the smooth and wily agent himself had made a fluke.

“The sucker bit. He went down in Arkansas and cleaned out that bunch of books inside of a week. He made more money than he had made in a whole month at shooing flies off from molasses barrels. He bought another bunch of books and sold them out, and still another.

“The next summer he struck a fellow who was selling these here parlor picture things—what do you call 'em? You put a sort of a do-funny up to your face and look through two glass eyes that make the picture look life size and have depth to it—just like the thing itself.”

“You mean the stereograph,” volunteered Joannis Carolus.

“Thank you, John,” answered his father’s silk buyer. “Yes, sir; this fellow, who had been a rube grocery clerk and had been done

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by a snagged book agent, let himself get it in the neck again, as one of these stereo—s—
What's the name, John? ”

“ Stereograph,” supplied Joannis Carolus.

“ Yes, as one of these stereograph agents handed him a bunch of those things. But the rube went down into Arkansas again and had the greatest success selling the pictures. The business at that time was on the bottle, but that very fellow nursed this business carefully and to-day is making, in connection with his partners, a hundred thousand a year. He travels in foreign lands and his wife takes along a nurse for the youngsters.

“ I've often laughed when he told me how and why he started in. ‘ I knew,’ said he to me, ‘ that I was as green as a cymling, but when that smooth agent showed me those things he fanged me in the roof of the mouth and I couldn't get off the hook either, but I argued that most of the people in the world were just as green as I was.

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“ ‘ After I'd been buying those things from a concern for a while, I concluded that I would get cameras of my own and begin to make them myself. I really felt that there was a merit in those pictures. I, myself, had always wanted to travel, and when I looked at these stereograph pictures I felt that I was right on the spot. When I went out canvassing I saw that they pleased people, and I felt that what pleased people could be sold to them. In a little while I took my brother in with me and left my father to fill the orders that were sent in. Just we three worked this business then.’ And do you know, gentlemen,” continued the silk buyer, “that this very yokel of a Kansas grocery clerk to-day employs from three to five thousand agents. Hundreds of young men in this country to-day are making their way through nine months of schooling by spending three months of their time during the summer in selling these stereographs. They give satis-

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faction and they last for a long time, but the factory is continually making good subjects, just as the publishing house is always making new books. He has branch houses all over the world. Yes, sir; the thing in manufacturing is to make something that gives satisfaction and on which you can repeat."

"Well, that fellow *stuck to his business*," remarked the specialty manufacturer.

"Yes, and sticking to it is one of the things that will help to win," replied the shoe merchant.

"Yes, sure," spoke up Watkins, looking straight at Joannis Carolus—and perhaps obeying a request of the college boy's father—"attending to business will help to build a business; but at the same time there's no use in a man eternally drudging. The business man is the man of all men who should have some leisure time each day that he may devote to self-culture; and the professional

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men who are so set up about their accomplishments don't really know just how cultured many business men are—men at whom they turn up their noses. First, a man should attend to his business—to make a success of it. He need not, of course, be quite so ignorant of other affairs as one of my actor friends once was. I'm sure you've all seen Eddie Foy. Eddie, you know, is wise in the ways of the world, but he was about the most verdant shamrock that I ever knew when he first went on the stage. He came right out of the Kerry Patch in Chicago and made a hit on the first ball pitched. He was under the management of Henderson. After Eddie had caught on good and hard in a couple of plays, Henderson sent him over to Paris to select costumes for a new extravaganza. Just before he left I met him on the street and he said to me:

“ ‘ George, come on and go over to Paris with me.’ ”

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“ ‘ I’d like to go the best in the world, Ed, but I’m afraid I can’t.’

“ ‘ Oh, come off! And come on, anyway! I’ll give you the time of your life. See here, I’ve just received a letter from Miranda ’ (Miranda was the première danseuse of the company with Foy), ‘ and she is at her old home in Rome and she wants me—see, here’s the letter—to come down to It’ly.’ Then in an undertone he asked, ‘ And say, George, on th’ level, where the —— is It’ly, anyway? ’ ”

As the business men talked, Joannis Carolus, as it had been his custom at Harvard, made a few notes. These read:

“ To build a manufacturing business, faking won’t work; use good material; make good stuff; create something new which people like and which will be used widely; stick to business.”

CHAPTER II

THE MAN WHO WORKS FOR YOU

THE party of business men continued to sit in the roof garden on the New Astoria, where they had already sat for an hour. Joannis Carolus, the college-boy son of a well-to-do father, took little part in the conversation. Business, the subject talked about, was new to him; he was to listen and learn, rather than to talk and teach.

“It’s a wonder that we manufacturers,” began the maker of shoddy cloth, “are able to turn out anything at all. Our workmen are getting so that we can’t do anything with them. They’re a measly lot, anyway—these laborious fellows. Did you see that big parade on Labor Day? Well, after it was over,

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nearly the whole town was in a stagger, and here these fellows that booze up are trying to run our business. They're getting so that we can't get a good day's work out of them. They take no interest in what they are doing. At the strike of the clock on the quitting hour they drop their tools, to a man, even if they could work a minute longer and finish something they were doing. I tell you, a manufacturer must keep a whip in his hands all the time to keep these duffers in line."

"Well, it may be that way in your factory," burst out the hat manufacturer, who had joined the group, "but it isn't that way in mine. I used to have ideas like you, myself, but several years ago, just as I was going down to my factory over here in Orange, I heard the door bell ring. I opened the door myself. There stood a bent old man.

"'Good morning, sir,' said he, with a tremble in his voice that made me feel sorry for him. I knew he wanted something. As

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a rule I turn off these fellows who come prowling around, but I listened to what this old man had to say. 'Maybe you have some furniture that you would like polished,' said he. 'I'll do a good job for you if you have something of that kind, sir. I don't like to go around this way bothering people, but I'm not able to do a full day's work in the factory like I used to. I could get along pretty well myself all right at some puttering kind of a job, but that wouldn't give me enough money for my needs nowadays. My daughter, who is a widow with five young children, has been sick for several years, and I have to help her along. Medicine and doctor bills come high, too, I tell you, when a man has to work by the day for a living.'

"'Yes, come right in,' said I. 'You're just the very man we've been looking for. My small boy here the other day took a toy train and made a railroad track out of the top of our davenport. He scratched some of

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the varnish and finish off and we're very glad to have you come and do it over. Here is the davenport right here,' said I to him. 'How much will it be worth for you to fix it up?'

" 'Oh, I can do that for fifty cents,' said the old man. 'It will take me only a couple of hours or so.'

"Well, now, let me tell you, friends, my father before me was at one time a workman at the bench, and I kind of thought that I wouldn't like for my sister to be supported in this way, so I said to the old man, 'You make a real good job of it and I'll just give you a dollar. Every once in a while we need a little something of this kind done, and you be sure to come around occasionally and we will save the work for you.' I don't believe exactly in giving money to people all right, but if you can manage to throw a little work in the way of the needy I don't think it's a bad thing to do.

"Another time when the old gentleman

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was polishing a table for me he said: 'I worked for thirty-five years for one firm. I was in the polishing department of a large furniture establishment. You see, I know how to do this work even if I am seventy-six years old. But the rheumatism got a grip on me and I had to lay off once for about three months. They put in another man to take my place, and when I went back and told them I was ready to work again the foreman said to me—and it almost broke my heart—"Well, Mr. Travers, I guess we won't have a place for you here any more. You are getting so old that you can't do much, and then you are ailing with rheumatism and we can't count on you. Business is business, you know. Your children ought to begin to take care of you now, anyway." "But I haven't but one child and she's a widowed daughter with five little children," said I. "Can't you give me something to do?" "No, I was talking to the manager

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about that," said the foreman—he was a hard-hearted kind of a fellow anyway, just the sort that the company wanted in that place—"and the old man said that he didn't want anyone just puttering around, that he wanted people to work for him who could work. There's no use arguing the case. That's the end of it," and away he turned. There I had worked for that firm for thirty-five years, and when I was over seventy years old, and not able to do anything much but polish furniture, they turned me away. I had just a dime in my pocket that morning, and that was every cent there was between me and starvation. But I'm doing pretty well now. I'm getting lots of good customers all around.' 'You shall always have a good customer here,' answered I. 'We'll save the work for you.'

"Well, I got to thinking about that old man as I went down to my factory, and I made up my mind that if anyone had worked

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for me for thirty-five years, and if he were in trouble, I would help him out. And then I began to think that there was perhaps a sort of duty resting upon me to look after the welfare of my employés.

"You know the place where I take my meals and sleep is not my home, altogether, anyway. In my factory I spend most of my hours when I am awake. My workmen whom I meet are my real friends and clubmen. It is in my factory that my interest centers. Of course I love my family and all that, but my real home is not the place where the lawn is—my factory is my home."

"Well, don't you profit by close association with your men?" asked the shoe man.

"Why, to be sure."

"Well, I know one man out in Chicago," continued the shoe man, "who not only believes that his workmen are his best friends, but who actually makes his dwelling place right among them. His own wife and daugh-

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ter do the housework and he keeps down the living expenses to a level with that of his average workman. And no man in America is making any better shoes than he. Wherever he sells goods once he sells them again, and he has placed them with the biggest dealers in this country."

"No high salaries to dummies, eh?—all same insurance companies," broke in the hat manufacturer.

"No—not even one for himself."

"We have a striking example in our country," began with foreign accent a German representing a Berlin chemistry establishment, "of what one gains by treating his men right."

"You mean the Krupp plant at Essen, do you not?" asked the hat manufacturer.

"Exactly—exactly," replied the German. "And that, I believe, is the greatest little city in the world. Essen contains over sixty thousand of the happiest people on earth."

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“ Why do you say that ? ” asked the manufacturer of shoddy cloth.

“ Because I have been there,” retorted the German, “ and it wouldn’t hurt you to make the trip yourself. About half a century ago, the elder Krupp was a workman in a cannon factory. Along with his fellow workmen he ate his black bread, without butter on it, and drank his little bucket of beer at the noon hour. While he was earning perhaps less than four marks a day—which would be about a dollar in your American money—he made a discovery which has revolutionized the manufacture of cannon. He was wise enough, too, not to get cheated out of his invention. By and by he started a little plant of his own, and to-day his establishment is perhaps the greatest manufacturing institution in the world.

“ When he began his factory, having known what it was to suffer at the hands of a hard taskmaster, he took an oath that he

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would always treat his workmen as his fellow men. He argued that it was not only his duty to treat his men right, but that if he did so he would get out of them better work.

“And so he has. To-day this Krupp establishment makes armor plate so strong that nothing but a Krupp gun can shoot through it.”

“Well, in what way did he treat his workmen so as to get the best out of them?” asked the young man from college.

“Well, in the first place,” replied the German, “he paid his men good wages; and then, besides that, he looked after the welfare of all his people almost as if they had been members of his own family. And so he considered them. He built cheerful little homes for the men who had families. To-day as you walk through the streets of that town you will find gardens in front of all the houses and flowers blooming in them.

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“Krupp is dead now and so is his son, but his granddaughter is continuing the good work. She is looked upon in our country with the same regard that a favorite princess receives.

“And the elder Krupp did not stop with making homes for his people. He also built hospitals and employed physicians and attendants to look after them. When anyone in the town would become sick he was free to go to the hospital and receive treatment. The hospital was not used to secrete men injured in the works and keep them from friends and legal advisers, as are the hospitals in some of the big American plants.

“He also built libraries and stocked them with thousands of books. He saw that all the children in the town went to good, clean, sanitary schools, and when these children grew up he made it possible for them to marry at an early age and to be able to raise their own little families. This great man,”

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continued the German, warming up after the manner of his race, "also looked after the pleasure of his people. When people have pleasant pastimes they take a greater interest in their labor. The trouble with most of the men who employ great forces of men and girls is that all they seek for and all they care for is to get work—work—work out of them. I fear from what I see of your American institutions, gentlemen, that you have not in any very great degree improved upon conditions in the old world.

"Yes, sir; that grand old man looked out after the pleasure of his people. He built gymnasiums, and halls in which they could dance, made a club house where they could assemble for their parties so that the young people formed literary clubs and musical organizations, and things like that. He was a broad-minded man—this man Krupp. And by his liberality he even built a church for each denomination in the town. He drew

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his workmen to him so closely that they revered him as they do the Kaiser."

"It's a pity we haven't more such men," remarked the hat manufacturer.

"Well, we have a few," remarked a gentleman who had kept quiet until this time. "I chance to represent a Chicago firm that does a business of forty to fifty millions a year. The head of that establishment is still living. Nearly fifty years ago he, too, was a man who worked for his daily wage. He was a steam fitter and you never heard of a strike in his establishment. His men love him as the Essen workmen love Krupp. Why, last Christmas he didn't send to each one of his workmen a razor-breasted turkey—not much! He distributed among them a quarter of a million dollars in cash!

"It so happened that I, myself, was the one called upon, many years ago, to pass around the checks when the head of this plant first concluded to make this distribution of

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a share of his profits. When I handed the checks to the first few they wanted to know what they were for. I said, 'Well, boys, it's just a present from the old gentleman. You've been good and faithful during the last year and he appreciates it and wishes you to have this for a Christmas present.'

"Do you know I couldn't go down the line very far. I simply had to quit. That whole factory force suddenly became as solemn as if attending a funeral. I want to tell you that when men weep there is something doing. Yes, sir; there were scores of men, that day, who actually cried when they received those checks and knew they were free gifts. You can bet there isn't any strike in that establishment, because every man feels like the establishment is his own."

"You bet he pursues the proper policy," spoke up a man traveling for a Boston extract house. "There's Tom Walsh out in Colorado—you've all heard of him—he's liv-

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ing down in Washington now in the finest residence in the city and entertaining all the cream of aristocracy that drifts over this way. Why, that fellow is one of the biggest-hearted men in the world and one of the broadest gauged. If that old man who polished your furniture had been in Tom Walsh's employ," continued the extract man, "he never would have been turned away like he was.

"Why, do you know, one day the police arrested an old man in Denver who was drunk and half delirious. When they put him in the jug he kept saying to the jailer, 'Just tell Tom Walsh that Oime in here and Tom'll get me out all right.' The jailer thought his prisoner was only pipe-dreaming, but as the old man insisted on it so strongly he took his name and sent a telegram down to Mr. Walsh in Washington. Back came a reply at once, and one of Walsh's friends in Denver went down to the calaboose and got the old man out.

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“ And the funny thing about this, too, was that the old man had a trunk away down in Texas somewhere that contained a lot of ore samples. He had worked for Walsh twenty years before. The ore was rich, and if I mistake not, Walsh is developing one of those mines right now and will make the old man rich again before he dies.

“ But that’s not what I was going to say. Walsh treats his miners better than any man in the world. When all of this strike trouble was going on in Colorado a year or two ago, you didn’t hear of the men at the Camp Bird going out, did you? Camp Bird, you know, is the Walsh property.

“ I happened to be up at the Camp Bird one day, and the foreman told me how the men acted when the question was up as to whether or not they should go out on a strike. Every mother’s son of them went down six miles to Ouray, where the meeting was to be held. One or two agitators had it up their

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sleeves to get the men out, but they, themselves, took hold of the meeting and decided that they would 'not go out on Tom.'

"You just ought to go into the store room of that boarding house up at the mine. There you would see stacks and stacks of the very best food that can be bought. The kitchen is kept as clean as a new tin pan. The miners don't sleep in dirty bunks, but they have comfortable beds. In the boarding houses there are plenty of bathrooms, and when the men come out of the mines Walsh has other men take their old wet clothes and hand them their dry ones. I once heard him say, 'Why, when my men come from their work and go to dinner I want them to go feeling like gentlemen.'"

"That sounds all very nice," half sneered the maker of shoddy cloth, "but I don't believe it will work. I don't see how one can afford to look after his workmen and pay them these high wages you're talking about.

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That's all visionary." This manufacturer was almost making himself an unwelcome guest in this little party, and the hat manufacturer blurted out to him: "Ah! your views are entirely too narrow. I don't blame you a bit, though, for I'll confess I had a great deal to learn when I went into my father's factory. I hadn't been there a great while when there was a strike threatened. My father thought of course that the men would go out as they had done many times before, that his factory would be locked up for several months, and that he would simply have to pass up the profits of the season's business.

"There happened to be at that very time an old gentleman from Chicago down here in New York. My father said to him—they had been dealing with each other for twenty-five years then—'Now, look here, I wonder if you can't help me in some way to prevent this strike. It would cost me a very great

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loss and I wouldn't be able to supply you with the goods you want.' 'Yes, friend,' said the old man to my father, 'you can prevent this strike.' They had talked over what the hat-ters demanded. At that time they were not making more than ten dollars a week. 'Yes, sir, you can prevent this trouble. Give the men what they want. Now, Fred, how would you like to have your wife and your daughter and your boy, here, live on ten dollars a week? There! You are getting right up against the thing yourself. Ask your own self this question. All that these men are asking for is to be put on a piecework scale. Let them have it. You'll have to charge me, I know, about twenty-five cents a dozen more for my hats, but *I am willing to pay the advance*, because if you pay your men so they can live better, *they will make better hats*. After a while all these other fellows here will have to do the same thing that you do and everybody will be better off.'

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"To-day the men in my factory—my father, you know, is no longer in the business—are making twice the wages they did then and they are *making better goods*."

"Yes, but you can give the men too much rope," insisted the shoddy-cloth man. "They will run things for you."

"The opposite of that is exactly true," answered the shoe merchant. "The very shoe factory from which I buy most of my goods, and which does the largest business of its kind in the world, lets its men have a voice in the management of the factory. Instead of trying to ward off difficult questions, he invites them. He has established a board of arbitration. He wants to hear the complaints and he profits by hearing the kicks in this way:

"If any workman or number of workmen have any complaint about wages or anything else, it is so arranged that they shall make this complaint to the foreman. Then these foremen are organized into a Board and if

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the complaint is unjust they stop it right there. If they consider the complaint well grounded, then they carry it to a higher board. If necessary, it comes to the head of the house and he listens to it, but the result is that most of the troubles are settled by the men themselves before they go to the highest court. This is the same man I was telling you about earlier in the evening. He not only cuts the best leather he can get, but he gets the best men and gets the most out of these men that there is in them because he treats them right. This is why he has built up such a great business."

"You bet that goes a long ways—this treating people right," spoke up the railroad man. "Even in railroading, the company that treats its men the best gets the best men. I'll never forget, I know, what my company did for me when I was a young fellow. I had been humping it over the books in the offices quite a while until I had about as much

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life in me as a dummy in front of a clothing store. One day the manager in the office said to me: 'Harry, you're doing mighty good work for us here in the office, but I fear it is rather breaking down your health. I've seen the manager of the freight department and he tells me he'll make a place for you out on the road soliciting business, and I think we'll spare you out of here for a year or so and let you do that. When you get built up again why, of course, we want you back in here—if you feel that you care to come back to office work.'

"They first sent me out for a couple of weeks under the wing of one of their old freight solicitors, and I shall never forget the first day I went out to do my own scratching. This was out in Springfield, Illinois.

"I was told that one of the largest shippers in the town was a man who ran a big dry-goods store. I walked by that door twenty times before I finally had nerve enough

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to go in, and if it hadn't been that I was more or less on my honor and had been treated so fairly, I believe I would have gone back to office work if I had known that I would die as a result of it.

"As it was I walked back to the office finally and told the gentleman my business. He held out his left hand to me. The right hand was covered by a glove—it was a cork one.

" ' Yes, sir, you bet your life I give freight to your road. Why, it's my old road. I lost my hand for them. They treated me mighty squarely, too, when that misfortune came. They paid me a few thousand dollars, and my wife and I began a little business in this town. It was her old home. My wife is no longer in the store, and it's a pretty hard thing to go from punching tickets to measuring calico, but here I am and you can see we're getting on all right.

" ' As far as my freight is concerned, you

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have all of it; but come on, now, I want you to go up to the house with me and after luncheon I'll take you around to see the biggest shippers in the town.'

"And that man hitched up his horse and drove to every good shipper from that point. It was the interest I had in my company which made me work.

"You know when you have an interest in a business you can work at it in a different way from when you go at it half-heartedly. I shall never forget on that very trip I went to see a man who had to make a shipment of five carloads of eggs. As I was going to his town, I met a competitor in the smoker. 'Going to Henly?' said he. 'Yes, I'm going after those eggs that you want.' 'All right,' said he, 'there are going to be four of us down there. I think we'll pluck your pinfeathers, all right.' 'Well, we'll see,' I answered cheerfully.

"When I went into the man's store who

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had the eggs to ship, he was busy talking to the man who had come with me on the train. I tried to keep out of his way, but he asked me, 'Is there something I can do for you?' 'Yes, you can give me those five cars of eggs to ship, if you want to, but I'll get out of the way until you finish talking with my friend,' said I. 'Come around after luncheon,' he answered.

"I saw my merchant friend in a hotel at luncheon with another traveling freight agent. I felt sure that I had a hard game, but somehow I said to myself I was going after that shipment and going to get it, too. When I went in I merely said that I would like to ship the eggs for him. 'Well, that depends upon conditions,' said he. 'What are your conditions?' 'Well, rates, speed, and treatment.' 'I don't know that our rates are any lower than others,' said I. 'And I don't know that we make so very much better time, but still I'd like to get that shipment.' 'How

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often do you ice?' 'Four times,' said I, 'and when I say four times I mean four times. I'll put them through in four days and three nights for you, too. This I will guarantee. Now, look here, sir,' said I. 'My company is a good, square company. I don't belong on the road. I am very green at this business. I was working in the office and, as you see, was getting pretty thin. My manager, just to build me up in health, saw that I got a place on the road.' 'Well, now, that's enough. Don't go any farther,' said the merchant. 'I like to deal with people who treat the men that work for them right. Companies that do this usually treat their customers right. Now, I'm going to give you a trial of two cars. If they go through all right, you're to get the rest of it.'

"I wired at once to have two good, clean cars come in the morning. When they came, properly iced and looking clean and fresh, the shipper said, 'Well, now we won't debate

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about the other cars at all. Order them at once.'

"Yes, sir, people like to deal with concerns that treat their men right," concluded the railroad man.

"Well, this conversation all seems very strange to me, and yet very familiar," began the hat salesman. "Strange because of a coincidence—familiar because last night I had a dream which I will tell you.

"I dreamed that two men came into my room and said, 'Young man, we have come here to ask you to do a very strange thing.' 'Well, what is it?' I asked. 'We each wish to give you half a million dollars which you shall use in the way that will do the most good. I, myself, have given away many millions of dollars. I have endowed a few colleges and I have given money to build a library in every community where they have asked for it. Still, the newspapers say that I am a hard man.'

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“ ‘ And I,’ spoke up the other strange visitor, ‘ have given away many millions of dollars for education, and yet these same newspapers say it is “ tainted money.” Now, what we wish you to do is to take this million dollars—here it is—and do with it that thing which you decide will accomplish the greatest good.’ Without saying another word, the two strange visitors left my room and closed the door, leaving the million in two-thousand-dollar bills upon my table.

“ ‘ This is a strange situation for a poor hustler like me to be in,’ I thought, ‘ but here the money is left with me. What shall I do with it? I can’t build any libraries or endow any universities—that’s a cinch, because my two strange visitors have tried this and are still roasted by the newspapers. I don’t exactly believe it would be right to them or fair to the people to whom I gave it if I stood down upon the street corner and handed out a hundred or a thousand to every one who

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comes along until it was all gone. I'll start a big hat factory,' said I, 'and I'm going to start it on this basis:

“ ‘ Instead of building a factory in a smoky city or on a dusty, murky street, I'll go out to a suburban town and build it where I can have grass and trees around it. I shall keep it clean and hang beautiful pictures on the walls that will inspire my workmen. I shall build a hospital and a library and a club house and homes for my workmen—very much like our friend here from Germany has told us that his countryman did.’

“ ‘ I shall see, too,’ I continued to dream, ‘ that my workers are made happy by having something uplifting to do during their hours of leisure. I do not see why some of them may not be students and others teachers. I do not see why they should not organize an orchestra and a choral society, or the young women study music and learn to paint and do other pleasant things during the hours that

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they might otherwise waste.' And I dreamed that all this could be done very easily.

“‘It seems to me,’ I thought, ‘that I would not be giving my workers their full and just dues when I did nothing more than pay them their weekly wages. I will,’ I resolved, ‘pay them their wages, I will pay to myself a reasonable interest—four per cent upon my million dollars. Then I will take the rest of the earnings and divide them. I will take half because my capital is worth something—capital being accumulated labor—and the other half I will distribute among those who worked for me in proportion to what each one has earned.’

“My dream did not end here, for just before I awoke, with the sun shining in my face, I saw a little colony that I had built after I had been running my factory for ten years. My business had grown so great that I had built addition after addition to my plant. My workers all had good, comfort-

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able homes; they dressed well; were contented, intelligent, progressive, and some of them were accomplished. The children skipping ropes in our little park were clean and happy. A few of the very old men, who had grown too old to work, sat on benches looking at the little ones and speaking with gratitude of the pensions which made them comfortable. Ivy vines grew over the brick walls of my factory and big, sleek horses pulled heavy loads of cases toward the freight houses."

While this one man had told his dream, all those who sat around the table looked straight at him, listening intently. For a moment after he had quit speaking all were quiet until the hat manufacturer said to his salesman, "Well, let us hope that your dream may come true! It is made of the right stuff."

CHAPTER III

SCATTERING THE STUFF AFTER YOU MAKE IT

A STIFF wind drove the party of business men who sat on the roof garden of the New Astoria down below. As they left the elevator and made their way toward the café their course lay through a swarm of ravenous salesmen in the lobby, and the buyers of the party were almost obliged to fight to keep from being devoured. One merchant, from St. Louis, had fourteen cards thrust upon him while crossing the floor. "By Jove! This is fierce!" he exclaimed as he finally reached the café and joined the party which had gathered around the white cloth. "Yes, sir; this is fierce!"

"You bet," remarked Watkins. "It is

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easy enough to manufacture—but the real job is scattering the stuff after you make it.”

“I don’t altogether coincide with your idea,” remarked Joannis Carolus, the young college man who was out to pick up points and who, after having listened to these plain blunt business men for a couple of hours, had grown a little more at ease. “Does not Emerson tell us that a man may make poor things and try to sell them on the busiest thoroughfare, but let him make something good—aye, a mouse trap even—and though he be in the midst of a dense forest, people will make their path to him. I haven’t quoted Emerson exactly right, but I have given you, notwithstanding, the essence of his conclusion.”

“I don’t know much about what Emerson thinks of business,” answered the hat manufacturer, “but I do know it doesn’t make any difference how good you make stuff; to get rid of it you must hustle. It is all right

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to give a good circus to the people after you get them in the tent, but to get them there you must post up your fancy show bills and give a good street parade. The show bills were enough to catch me when I was a boy. I didn't pay much attention to these things as I grew older, but even now when I see a woman in a cage of lions being hauled through the streets and hear a lot of red-coated fellows blowing horns, I get the quivers and usually end up by taking the children to the circus.

"It used to be so that a man could make good stuff and go out in the middle of a forest, as my young friend here says, and have people come to him; but nowadays he has a fierce time running 'em in if he has a ground floor on Broadway.

"Merit is a mighty good thing to have as a background, but to get there you must mix it with a whole lot of rustle."

"Yes, sir, that applies even in our busi-

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ness," said the publisher. "It used to be so that books sold themselves, but nowadays we have to *sell books*."

"Yes, you bet your life, you must sell everything," began the specialty man. "Emerson's college ideas about business are all right, but they won't work. I'd a good deal rather listen to what the Emerson that makes shoes says than to listen to what Emerson who wrote books has to say. I used to think that this selling was a very easy thing. I was raised on a farm and after I began to wear cuffs and sneak out dad's razor to mow the fuzz off of my face and feel rich enough to go to dances and throw in half a dollar when the darky fiddler passed the hat around, I thought it was a little more honorable occupation to rattle at a coal-oil pump in a grocery store than to curry horses. I became a clerk. I used to see these smooth, slick fellows from Louisville and Cincinnati coming into the store where I worked, beam out a glad smile

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to the old man who owned the business, pass around a few Spotted Fawn cigars to us boys, and in a little while book a nice order. Then they would either have the livery man drive them to the next town, or else kick up their feet on the banister of the hotel porch and take the world easy until train time.

“ This looked good to me, and after I had grown enough in wisdom to wear patent leather shoes a couple of sizes too small, and to have my trousers creased by my washer-woman, I made up my mind that I would go to Cincinnati and look around to see which wholesale house I would go on the road for.

“ Just before I went to clerking my father gave me a colt, which turned out to be a bird of a horse. I sold this horse and got for him a hundred and fifty dollars in new greenbacks. This wad looked as big to me as a roll of rag carpet. I stuck the hundred and fifty into my pistol pocket and went to the city feeling rich as Jay Gould.

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"It was lucky for me that I had that wad along. I got to Cincinnati and put up at a two-dollar-a-day house. M-m! but I was flying! Then I went out into the city to size up the various grocery and hardware houses—these were the lines that I knew—to see which one I would go on the road for. After I had taken a squint at several of them, I walked into one and asked to see the man who 'hired the drummers.' A small boy asked me if I had a card. About that time my mouth began to twitch and I lost part of my voice. About the only cards I had ever known anything about were the kind that had fancy backs and came fifty-two and a joker to the deck. I said, 'No, sir; I haven't any card. I have never worked for any firm and had my name on one, but I want to start in here and go on the road.'

"The boy mumbled something to the old man in the office, who said something back without even looking up; then my young

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friend, who had asked me for the card, said to me, 'Don't want inexperienced men,' and started addressing an envelope. That was the first time that a deal had come to me like this. I simply got huffy and walked proudly out; but humility came to me before the day was over. I'll bet I went into forty places. More than once I felt sorry that I had given my bosom friend my old job at clerking, and wanted to go back to the little village and hitch horses for the farmers' wives who came to town. Yet I had grit and that wad in my pistol pocket, and I wasn't going to give up.

"The next morning I walked into a big wholesale cigar house. By this time I had learned to pick out where the boss stayed myself. As I went in the door I saw an old gentleman sitting in a little glass office to the right. He wore a long white beard and a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles. This time I braced him straight. 'Good morning, sir,' said I. 'Good morning,' the old gentleman

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said politely, 'is there something I can do for you?' 'Yes, sir, you can,' said I. 'I walked the streets of this here town all day yesterday, and I couldn't find anybody that would give me a job. I know I was raised on a farm and I haven't done anything but clerk in a little country store, but I believe I've got as much sense as a whole lot of these fellows that tote sample-cases around; and for a good many years of my life I got up at four o'clock in the morning and fed the horses before I had my breakfast. Now, I want to go to work, sir, and to go to work for you. All I want is a chance'—and with this I reached back in my hip pocket and flashed that roll. 'Yes, sir, all I want is a chance. You give me a case of samples and if I don't sell goods don't you pay me any money. I can pay my own expenses.'

"I reckon my straight talk locoed the old man, for he at once said to me: 'Well, young man, I like your self-confidence, sir. We shall

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fix up a line for you and give you a territory over in Kentucky and try you—let us say for a month. At the end of that time come in and we can talk business a great deal better. You needn't worry about paying your own expenses. We will not put out a man whom we do not think enough of to invest this much in. When you get your samples up go to the cashier and he will give you a hundred dollars to travel on.'

"Jerusalem! When I left town that night with a hundred and fifty of my own money in one hip pocket and a hundred dollars belonging to my firm in the other, which bulged out my pocket as if I carried a Colt's navy, I was the happiest man that ever left Cincinnati. I couldn't keep from going out on the platform of the car once in a while and putting my two hands on my money while I threw out my chest and cocked up the end of my cigar until the lit end almost burned my eyebrows.

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“Down in my country they say, ‘A fool for luck and a bob-tailed dog for ‘possums.’ I reckon because I knew so little I got along. There wasn’t any house in the country, when I talked to a merchant, that was as good as mine. The end of the month I went in and the old man said to me: ‘Well, sir; you’ve done first rate. You’ve made a good record and you can keep on down there where you are at a salary of a hundred dollars a month.’ That was when I became too proud to count eggs. No, sirree, no more rattling coal-oil pumps for me. I was a traveling man.

“If I had just kept my common sense and gone right on I’d have been lots better off, but after a while I felt that I must flash a diamond stud and I spent all my salary on jewelry and clothes and renting poker chips. I made a good salary, all right, but after four or five years I got to be simply downright ornery—yes, sir—ornery. I had to change houses a

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time or two, and get on my uppers, before I ever got a grain of common sense.

“Now, I’ve not been to college as my young friend here has, but I have humped it around the country for a good long while, and I want to tell you that even if a man has something good to sell he must keep hustling to sell it—and it’s getting harder and harder every day. Competition is growing keener and keener. It was easy enough when I first started out to sell goods on personality—and while this goes a long ways yet—good, clever work must back up good stuff. You can’t distribute your employer’s goods to any alarming extent unless you first hand out a heap of energy, attentiveness, and all ’round hustle.”

“Yes, and there is a growing tendency on the part of the retail merchant to buy direct from the manufacturer,” began the St. Louis buyer—he was a successful dealer in ladies’ ready-to-wear goods—“and there are several

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reasons for this. In the first place, we merchants all feel that we want to be on the ground floor. This middleman business is fast becoming a thing of the past. Every handler that we place between the first source of supply and the final demand means just one more profit to be paid. Another advantage that we merchants get when we buy direct is that we can have stuff made to suit us a great deal better than if the goods have to pass through the hands of a middleman. A merchant knows the peculiarities of his trade, and if he can design his own garments, say in my business, he is going to be better satisfied than if he leaves the designing to some one on the outside. Of course, I confess that a great deal of this making special designs on the part of the retailer is all poppycock. I know that many of us put manufacturers to needless trouble, but at the same time it tickles the vanity of us all to be able to get things just as we want them. And an-

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other thing, it spurs the manufacturer on to make things right when he knows that he is dealing directly with the man who is going to sell the goods to the consumer. The manufacturer who makes goods for the jobber, who in turn sells them again to the dealer, is not nearly so careful about making things as he is when he deals direct with the retailer. Why? Because when he manufactures for the jobber it is oftentimes many months before the goods get to the consumers, and then the kicking is not so strong as when it comes direct from us. One thing that is helping the manufacturers more and more every day is rapid transportation both on land and on water. Why, comparatively few days will bring materials here to New York City from any part of the world, and a couple of sun-rises almost will see them from here out to the Mississippi River. Bull-team ideas are past, and bull-team methods are rapidly coming to an end."

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“ You are right about that,” said the retail shoe merchant. “ The very strongest competition that I have—in fact, I can scarcely compete with it at all—comes from a concern that manufactures its own leather, converts this leather into shoes, and has a long chain of retail stores all over the country that supply the customer direct. In just a word, the most successful establishment in my business is the one that practically takes the hide from the animal’s back and puts it on the customer’s foot. That is the ideal way to do business.

“ Now, just for example, I know a tanner who manufactures into gloves part of the leather he makes; the balance he sells to other glove makers. Now, ask yourself, which one cuts the best leather for his gloves—the man who makes it or the man who buys it from him? For my own part, if I were handling this line, I would buy the gloves from the man who made the leather. I know human

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nature; and the truth of the matter is that this man has a great deal easier time distributing his stuff than the other fellows. You see, the man who buys the goods is always hunting for the right place to buy them from, but he is not always able to find it. This gives the jobber a chance."

"The jobber," interrupted the hat manufacturer, "has his place. For a certain class of trade and for certain lines of goods he is a necessity. Now, take in my line, for example. No one factory—no ten factories, can successfully make a complete line of goods for the merchant in the country who buys only comparatively small quantities of anything, and who has none too much capital in his business. Of course, the great big dealer in the large cities in my line can profit some by buying directly from us perhaps, but still there is not such a very great difference, so far as price is concerned, as many imagine. A great deal of this is mere imagination. In

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a business where it is necessary to combine the products of several concerns in order to get together a complete line, the jobber can compete well with the manufacturer simply because when a manufacturer's sales of his products are small, his percentage to sell is proportionately great. Where a manufacturer makes a line and can sell it in sufficient quantities to the retailer to justify expenses, he can do business. Otherwise, he cannot. Of course, I quite agree with my friend from St. Louis in all that he has said. The whole question for a manufacturer is: Does he make a line, or can he make a line, of which he can sell large enough quantities to retailers to pay the salaries and expenses of his salesmen—enough to make a volume? ”

“ You are just exactly right in that,” remarked the silk buyer. “ Take in our business—the wholesale dry goods business—for example. There are thousands of items made in almost that many places. How would a

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factory down in Rhode Island that made nothing but hooks and eyes or tacks sell its product except through its jobber? Yes, there is a place for the jobber in the class of trade that buys small quantities only of any one thing that a factory turns out.

“One thing that the jobber should strive for, too, is to create individual lines and individual brands of goods. There is no profit in his handling marked articles. He may do this successfully in his own little village, but he cannot go into the other fellow’s territory unless he has merchandise that bears an individual brand or individual quality. The successful jobbers to-day are those who are really not jobbers. They rather combine the jobbing and manufacturing business; that is, they carry enough things to make a complete line, but they control the output of factories as nearly as they can, sometimes entirely, and in a great measure they really become manufacturers themselves.

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“ But whether a man be a manufacturer or a jobber he has his troubles with his customers. This distributing merchandise after it is made is like treading barefooted on a bed of roses. It may look pretty and smell sweet, but you must very often stop and pick a briar out of your heel. If you make a man pay too much you are certain to hear about it. *A concern that gouges its customer gouges itself.*

“ And it isn't every concern that knows how to handle its trade after it gets it. One of my friends once told me,” continued Watkins, “ of trouble he once had in getting six extra size shirts for one of his solid customers.

“ ‘ When the salesman for my furnishing goods house came around,’ said he, ‘ I merely told him to make half a dozen size eighteen shirts with sleeves thirty-six inches long. I told him that I wasn't very particular about the pattern, but what I wanted was

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something to fit. He sent the order into the house. The stock man in charge of that department wrote back to me that they did not have the exact pattern I had picked out, and that, as they made it a rule never to make special orders unless they filled them exactly, they had left that item out of the shipment. I immediately wrote back for them to select some other patterns and make them up instead. Back came another letter, asking me what sort of material I wanted. By this time I was mad as fire and I merely wrote on the bottom of his letter, "Let your office boy select cloth." And—so help me!—they wrote back saying they hardly felt like making up this size from cloth that their office boy would select, because if the material didn't suit, the half dozen shirts would be dead property on their hands. What block-heads some people are, anyway! This thing was getting to be sort of a joke with me, so I wired in for them please to send over to my

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clothing house and have the man from whom I bought my cloth select the patterns for the shirts. Meantime my customer was coming in every day—I stood him off from time to time—wanting to know if his shirts had come.

“ ‘ Well, sir, I received a long letter, stating that the clothing salesman I had asked them to have select the material was out of town—what should they do? Then I wrote in and told them they should either make me some sort of shirts or else send out a troop of militia to guard me from my angry customer; that he had been waiting for those shirts for six weeks; to please make me six shirts that were eighteen inches around the neck and that had sleeves thirty-six inches long; that they could make them out of chin-chilla, mackintosh material, silk, linen, calico, or lawn; that I didn’t give a —— what sort of stuff they used so long as they made them to fit. I never did get that special order

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from that house. I had to place it elsewhere before I could get it filled.' ”

“ A man must stand behind the goods he makes, too,” spoke up the hat manufacturer, “ and once in a while make good for his over-zealous salesman or keep quiet an unreasonable customer. One of my salesmen had the habit of guaranteeing goods sold in this way. He would say to a customer—and I couldn't stop him—‘ If any hats I sell you do not give your customers satisfaction, or if one of your customers makes a kick on any hat you buy from me, whether that complaint is justifiable or not, give him a new one and charge it up to my firm.’ One day when a man made a remittance he made a deduction of six dollars from the bill, saying that three of the customers had worn the hats he had got from us for eleven months, and that they had come in and made a complaint; that according to instructions of our salesman he had charged up that amount. Now, this customer was a

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straightforward, honest man—I could tell that from the letters he wrote—and what else could I do but credit him with the six dollars? ”

“That was good sense,” remarked Watkins. “A customer that isn’t worth six dollars to a wholesale house isn’t worth anything. The trouble with a great many houses is that they see the orders rolling into them through Uncle Sam’s mails just as easily as the one-cent advertisements that they chuck into the waste basket unopened. They forget how their salesmen on the road must hustle to sell these goods, however good they may be. I once sold a customer of mine a lot of furnishing goods. I asked him when he wanted them shipped. He said September 1st. He was away up in central Idaho, and it would have taken three weeks to get his goods to him by freight. A letter came into my house the first of September saying that he had not received any invoice for his goods and

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asked whether they had been shipped. The old gentleman in the office—this boy's father here—" continued Watkins, pointing to Joannis Carolus, "called me into the office and asked me where this place was and wanted to know if there was any express office there. I said, 'Yes, but surely you aren't going to express goods away out there, are you?' 'Why not?' said he. 'I gather that this man wants his goods in his house and not in ours by September 1st. It is true he didn't make this clear when he gave you the order, but at the same time I think I'll just send these goods out by express prepaid and let him pay us back the amount the freight charges would have been.' 'Why,' said I, 'if you do that you'll lose money on this bill.' 'That may be true,' said he with a tone of assurance, 'but I will make it up on his *future business*.'

"That old gentleman is the king of them all when it comes to taking care of a cus-

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tomers. I tell you, one of the best ways to build business is to *take care of the business you have built.*"

"I learned that a long time ago when I was a salesman," remarked a large manufacturer of first-class clothing, who had joined the party of business men as they walked through the office. "One of the very best accounts I have to-day came to me because one of my strongest competitors a few years ago did not treat one of my customers exactly as he felt he should be treated. You know this selling a line of goods to a second man in a town when you already have one customer there is waving the red flag in a bull's face. He perhaps has pumped his lungs out talking up a certain line, and if some one else gets a hold of it then he froths at the mouth.

"Well, sir, this customer that I speak of ran a first-class clothing store down in Missouri. Each season's business for this

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firm amounted to about seven thousand dollars—and that isn't a bad account, you know, gentlemen. The house, which was prospering so much that it began to get pretty chesty anyway, thought, 'Well, we are so good we ought to have another customer in that town.' They shipped a small bill of goods which another salesman had sold in that point. And let me say right here that that is one thing I shall never do. If I have a man on a territory he shall command that territory absolutely. If he's a good man that's the only way he can get anything out of it; if he's a poor man, I'll fire him.

"The bill was only for a hundred suits, but customer number one got onto it and quit them cold. I want to tell you this, gentlemen: We manufacturers and wholesalers don't appreciate enough, I fear, our customers out in the country. I know from my early experience on the road that a traveling man, blessed with all the good qualities with

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which the Lord can endow him, and backed up by the very best line of goods that we manufacturers can make, still must work hard and long to build for us a business; and when he puts a customer on our books it is then up to us to do our part as well as he has done his. We should not believe that it is our privilege to bump the storekeeper's head, but instead of that we should make of our customer an ally, not an enemy. In that way we can do a great deal toward successfully distributing our merchandise and building a business."

"Yes, you are right about that," remarked the St. Louis merchant. "But, say, it's growing late, gentlemen. I must make my way to my hotel. I believe I can now get through the office; the wolves of commerce have gone to their holes."

With this the party disbanded, Joannis Carolus walking thoughtfully down the street.

CHAPTER IV

THE MAN WHO REALLY BUILDS THE BUSINESS

JOANNIS CAROLUS, the young man just out of college, who had gone down to New York with his father's leading traveling salesman and had been for a week in the hives of metropolitan commerce, sat in the smoker of the Limited bound for Chicago. He was in the midst of a party of traveling men. His father's leading salesman, Watkins, was one of them. He did not then realize that he sat among the men who actually build the businesses—the men on the road!

“It is all right,” began an old timer, “for these people who make the goods or job them to settle back on their dignity a little—but it isn't all of them who know just how de-

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pendent they are upon their men on the road. It is only when a crackerjack man leaves a firm and the head of the house puts out a dub in his stead, that he finds out how much he is at the mercy of his salesmen. Of course there are a few strong lines of goods in the country that dead ones can go out and sell, but even these same firms that manufacture top-notch stuff would fare much better if they had good salesmen.

“Now, for example, there is one shoe firm in this country that can put their stuff in every town in the United States. They used to have a certain salesman working for them down in Texas. They thought he was the best ever and when he was laid up by the rheumatism and unable to make his trip they sighed and put a chipper young fellow out in his stead. He increased the sales for the house forty per cent the first trip!

“There is one old firm in the hat business in this country that have absolutely a cinch

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wherever they go. Nobody else does make, or, it seems, can make, anything as good as they do. For nearly a quarter of a century they did their business through a few jobbing houses, by mail, and with a couple of old foggy salesmen. The management changed and young blood put young blood out on the road. They have increased their output many fold since that time. Yes, sir, it is all very well to make good stuff, but a concern to prosper must have salesmen, not dummies."

"You bet your life," said the clothing man, "but at the same time a man on the road owes it to himself to have a good strong line. I know I was fool enough to work five years of my life for one house that either didn't or couldn't turn out good stuff. They were as nice people as there are on earth, but I finally had to quit them and get a bang-up line for my trade. My customers demanded it of me. When I walked into the

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office and told my people I was going to quit them, they said to me, 'Haven't we treated you right in every way, paid you a handsome salary for what you have done, and haven't we been obliging with your trade?' 'Yes, you have, and I am willing to grant you that. I am very sorry that I feel compelled to leave you; but I cannot continue to sell my customers personality and treatment. All of that helps a great deal, but what they want is clothing.' "

"Sure! Sure!" spoke up the Boston flavoring extract man. "The old-time days when you could walk into a man's store with a rattle for his baby in your pocket and sell him five times as much stuff as he really needed—if you cared to do so—are past, and the days of the old-time traveling man are over. All of this works good for the concern that is making reputable stuff. Why, it used to be so that a firm simply couldn't let a good man go, no matter what he did.

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"Any of you ever know Patsy Ryan, who used to travel out in Colorado?"

"Who that's ever been out West doesn't know Patsy?" exclaimed the old timer.

"Well, Patsy, you know," continued the extract man, "used to be a high roller. His salary was six thousand a year and he spent it, every cent. Why, that fellow would bet a thousand dollars on the turn of a card or quit business for a week to go to the horse races. He did exactly as he pleased. He was always behind with his firm, and if he would blow five hundred in a night the next morning, to square himself, he would make a sight draft on his firm for that amount. He was nearly a year's salary behind. Still, he did the business. He was the biggest grocery salesman that ever saw the Rockies.

"Finally, one day, Patsy, after having received his monthly warning for many years, got a letter from one of the partners in his firm. The letter read something like this:

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‘ Friend Patsy: You have been with us for a long time and your services have been deeply appreciated. You have been a good man, faithful and honorable, but really we cannot stand any longer this way you have of continuing in debt with us and yet drawing on us for \$250, \$500, and \$1,000, whenever you feel like it on one day and repeat the same performance again the next. Here I have before me a draft for \$500, dated the 25th instant, and here is another dated the 27th for \$700 more. Now, in view of this and of its having continued so long, I feel that I should ask you to resign. This I cannot do, but one thing is sure—either you or I must leave the firm. Very truly yours, ——’ ”

“ Well, what did he have to say to that? ” asked the clothing man.

“ Say? Patsy was always ready with an answer. He merely wrote back: ‘ My dear sir and friend: I have received your letter

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and am very sorry to learn from it that you are going to quit. You say that one of us must go. To be sure, it must be you; I owe the house too much. Wishing you success in whatever you may undertake, believe me, sincerely your friend, Patsy.' ”

“What was the *dénouement* of this episode?” inquired Joannis Carolus.

“The long and short of it was Patsy stayed with the house until they retired from business. He owed them a few thousand dollars; they not only squared his account but handed him a good-sized check on top of this.

“Well, that fellow was the most popular man that ever struck Colorado. He went up in Montana after he left there. One day while he was passing through Colorado on the Rio Grande, one of his old customers saw him at the station and persuaded the superintendent of the road to hold the train for half an hour so that his old friends in Salida could

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come down and see him. He got together a few members of the brass band and down the street they marched behind a cornet, a bass horn, and a drum."

"But old-time traveling men and the Indians are fast fading away," began the clothing man.

"Yes, there are only a few of us left," remarked the old timer.

"Yes, you bet," continued the clothing man. "Why, I remember when I was the only man who went out of New York City for my firm. And then I carried only one trunk and made a dozen towns. It used to be all market business, but here I am now hitting the trail with sixteen trunks and a packer. They are getting to cutting down the baggage in my line a great deal by selling stuff from swatches. That reduces the trunks, but we have to go after our men nowadays just the same. I used to hang out around the old Commercial Hotel in Chi-

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cago. Why, when a merchant came into the lobby he would get batted around from one of us to another like a tennis ball. Just to show you how it went, let me tell you of an old fellow who came in from Carthage, Missouri. He had a large general store and bought lots of goods, always in market. He was easy to pick out—tall, broad-brimmed hat, long gray whiskers, and goggles. Why he wore those goggles over his eyes, instead of specs, I never knew, but he kept them on just the same and he was a target for us all. Everybody knew just who he was.

“He didn’t have his regular houses to buy from in all lines. In clothing he was a shopper. I landed on him once, though, good and hard. I held him pretty well in line after that for several years. I knew his order was a great big one and I rather studied his habits. Early in the game all the boys in my business had given him their cards and

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asked him to come around. He came regularly to dinner every day at a quarter to twelve, and at half past almost to the dot every day he walked out of the dining room. I got a tip from one of my friends about the time he was going to buy clothing, which was next in the list. I saw him walk out of the dining room; after he put on his hat he took a stack of business cards out of his pocket and began to run over them. I walked up pretty close behind him, kind of easy, and when he turned to mine, I simply remarked to him: 'Major, that isn't a bad place to get your clothing. What's the use of turning any farther? I'm here on the spot, and if you are up to that line, come and go down with me and see what I have.' 'Well, I guess I might as well go along with you as anybody else,' he said. I saw he did go. That afternoon I sold him \$4,800."

"Ah, we had great pick-ups in those days," commenced a Chicago man. "I remember

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I was sort of a stock man. I hadn't gone on the road then, but the house would let most anyone bring them business in those days. One morning I was down in this same old Commercial Hotel—it was about seven o'clock. I saw a man walk up to register. In those days, you know, when you saw a merchant come in you waltzed right up and asked him to come around and see you—and he took no offense at it. 'That's what I have come in for,' he would say if a man started to apologize to him.

"So I walked up to my man and, just as he dropped a pen, I said, 'Friend, I judge that you are in to buy some goods.' 'Yes, sir, that's what I have come in for,' said he. 'I kind of got tired of farming, so I sold my land and I am going into business.' 'Well, I suppose you intend to carry hats, don't you?' 'Yes, I must have some hats,' said he. 'Where are yours?' I told him. 'All right, wait until I get some breakfast,'

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said he, 'and I guess I'll go down and buy some.'

" 'Now, look here,' said he, as we started out from the hotel to my store, 'I don't know anything in the world about business. I'll just have to come down here and place myself entirely in the hands of you boys. I've got a good deal of confidence in people anyway, and I don't think that anybody that wants to act right is going to be treated wrong' (and how much better off many merchants would be if they only felt like my friend did). 'I am just going to leave this whole thing to you. You pick me out what you think I ought to have. If I make money on them, why, you'll be the first man I'll come to when I want more. If I go broke and have to hire out to the man I sold my land to, why, you aren't going to get any more business.'

" Well, sir, that fellow was so sensible and straightforward and good-natured—he was

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the best fellow I ever knew in my life—and he struck me so that I gave him as fair a bill of hats as a man ever bought from me in my life. He was a successful merchant as long as he lived and he stuck to me for nearly twenty years. From the time he went into business until he died he never bought a single hat from anybody else.”

“I tell you, it’s lots different selling goods nowadays from what it was then,” spoke up the New York furnishing goods man. “I’m not such a gosling at the business myself. Nineteen years next January since I began, and I’ll tell you that things have changed. In the old times it was simple—just walk into your solid customer, sell him all he bought, go up to his house to dinner, and leave the next morning—and the same thing over the next day. But it’s lots more strenuous now. Just for example, I’ll tell you exactly how I worked one of my towns last trip:

“I reached there at five o’clock in the

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morning and gave the night porter a dollar extra to get my samples right in so that I could open up before breakfast. It's a good thing to stand in with the porters around a hotel anyway, and a dollar for two or three hours' time in busy season is mighty cheap. My trunks were in the sample room in a jiffy almost, and I opened up before breakfast. My old customer had been trying hard for a couple of years to spit out the hook, and he had rather got the factory idea into his head. While from the lines he was buying he was not gaining a great deal—in fact, was not getting as good stuff as I had been giving him—yet he had the idea in his head that he could buy direct a great deal better than he could from my house. So I didn't expect very much of him and went to work on the rest of the town. In case a man wants to leave you, if you lose control of him, it is better to let him go. You will profit more by putting in your time on new people. You

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cannot expect to fill your basket with good peaches from a broken limb.

“So right after breakfast I started in. The first man I called on an ox team couldn’t move; at any rate, not the ox team that I was driving. ‘We have our old house that we have been dealing with for a great many years,’ said he. ‘Our lines are established; they pay us a good profit—we don’t like to mix up—and what’s the use of changing? Your line may be a good line and all that, but it would not be a good line for us because we don’t like to mix.’ ‘You are right about that,’ said I. If you wish to differ with a man, always first agree with him. ‘I have some special lines to close, however, at a very great discount. I have just left home, and the house is giving me whatever jobs we have to dispose of. I can give you some mighty good stuff on which you can make a special sale. You need not put it on your shelves, just out on your tables and make a drive.

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Perhaps as you board over at the hotel when you go from luncheon you will drop in for a moment.' 'No, I won't bother about it,' said he. 'Very well, I won't ask you to. Perhaps I shall find time some time during the day when you are not busy and I will bring in a few of those special things under my arm.' A merchant will always look at samples if you bring them to his store.

"The next man I went to see—it had taken me about twenty minutes in the first place—was a jovial good fellow. I struck him just right. I saw that the line of goods he was carrying was not near so good as the one I was carrying. My house had a good name, and while I did not run down the other fellow's goods—this never pays—I said nothing about them—I only told him that mine were good. This blow-hard talk about having the very best thing on earth isn't a very good line of argument. The man who speaks with moderation always has bet-

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ter effect. If he will say there are lots of good lines on the road and his is only one of them, a merchant will have a great deal better opinion of what the traveling man carries than if he says that his is the biggest and best going.

“The second man on whom I called did not have a very large store, but he struck me as being one who would give one firm his entire bill.

“‘Yes, I will look at your goods,’ said he. ‘How long are you going to be here?’ ‘Until I get through with my business,’ I replied. ‘Never want to rush away from it.’ I saw he was easy. So I said, ‘Maybe you would see me this evening after you close up. I have a splendid light in my sample room.’ ‘That will just exactly suit me,’ said he. ‘I close up at eight o’clock and I will come right over.’ I rather turned my engagement that way in order that I might have daylight for others not so easy.

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“The next man I struck was one of those fellows who want to get out of business. He asked me if I couldn’t find somebody that wanted a good location. I made rather quick work of him, because I don’t want to waste any time on these fellows who are not satisfied with what they are doing. The man who is making a success of his business wants to stay with it, and the man who wants to get out is not making a success—and I don’t give them any of my golden moments.

“The next fellow I went to see I had to wrestle for an engagement, but I threw him. ‘Aw, I don’t want to look at any goods,’ said he. ‘What! Don’t you want to look at any?’ said I. ‘Let me tell you,’ I continued, ‘I used to have a customer down in Kentucky who said that he would look at any man’s goods that asked him politely. I know when I first struck him he said: “I will not buy anything. I will go over with you, sir,

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and see your samples. A man never knows anything if he doesn't look around. I know when I was a young fellow I was powerful bashful, but finally some of the boys got me to go out to see the girls. In that way I got me a good wife. Now, I am always willing to look at a man's samples even if I do not buy anything because I never would have got Sally if I hadn't seen her." ' This kind of put my friend in good humor and we swapped a few jokes. I always like to get right down to business as soon as I can, but once in a while a little jolly becomes necessary. I wound up with this man by making an appointment with him to come and take supper with me. He told me in the course of conversation that his wife was away from home, and he would look at my goods right after supper. That was engagement Number Two.

"Then I strolled in on another man whose stock was tumbled all to pieces and you could

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almost plant pumpkins in the dust on the tops of the box lids. My stay there was short.

“The next store I entered looked good to me. The stock was well kept. A clerk had a whisk broom in his hands, brushing off a pile of goods. A customer was trying on a pair of shoes in the back end of the store, and the man who looked to me like the boss stood at his desk up front writing. I said to myself, ‘Well, here is the man I am really after,’ but I could see that he was a little chilly and that I would have to warm him up. It is very peculiar how you feel the nature of the man you are about to approach before you meet him, but I rather like one of these fellows who has a little crust around him because when you break through and get his good will, even though he be a little gruff, he is worth a great deal more to you than one of these fellows who always puts out the glad hand and gives you a line of oily palaver.

“Without introducing myself, I merely

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walked up to the desk, as I saw him blot an envelope, and waited until I would not interrupt him. I said, 'Well, my story is short. Furnishing goods.' 'It's a bad time for you to strike me, I'm afraid,' said he. 'Here I've just written a letter to a firm that I have bought a lot of underwear of. I have always had trouble with those confounded people about terms, and they have a salesman, too, who has a little too much starch in his backbone to suit me. Here, see this letter I have just got from them. It makes me so confounded mad that I could eat a pod of red pepper and think it was a strawberry.' I read the letter. 'Well, this is rather provoking,' said I, and then I talked to him about the relationship that should exist between a wholesale house and its representative and the retail man. 'Well, confound it,' said he after a while, tearing up his letter, 'I am not going to truckle to these people. I am just going to countermand this

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stuff. You are here—I will look at yours.’ ‘When will it be convenient for you to see it?’ ‘About ten-thirty will strike me all right.’ ‘Well, ten-thirty goes,’ said I.

“I walked up the street—it was now half past nine—to see my old customer whose business had not been satisfactory. I very easily made an appointment with him for one-thirty, but I spent a little while with the clerks in my department—this was the biggest store in town—and little by little caught onto the fact that some of my competitors’ lines had not turned out quite as well as the old man had expected, and that was a good chance for a fair order. The clerks are always willing, you know, to put a good fellow on.

“It was now time for me to go back and fill my ten-thirty appointment. I finished within an hour and took a very satisfactory order. This man knew what he wanted and bought it quickly. He was strictly business

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and I didn't ask him to stay to luncheon with me. I felt, somehow, that it would be the wrong thing to do. I fear that a great many of the boys on the road, anyway, make the mistake of overdoing the friendship act. Did I lie down and take a nap at half past eleven? Not on your life! I jumped on a street car and went over to another part of the town where there was a big company store. I had never done any business with them, but I had a half hour that I could do nothing else with so I thought I would try one more. I couldn't get the man to come over with me, but he gave me a little order for a few items for immediate shipment and promised me that he would look my line over on my return trip. The order did not amount to a great deal, but the commissions were more than enough to pay my traveling expenses for the day.

"It was nearly one before I got back to the hotel. I was just about two-thirds

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through with my luncheon when I saw my old customer with the man in my department pass the dining-room door. Of course I didn't wait for pie. In the sample room my old customer laid out a big pile of samples; this showed me very plainly right at the start that he had been worshipping false gods elsewhere, and when I was through with him about three o'clock he had given me the best order I had taken for years. It was really a lucky thing for me that he had turned me down for a season or two because the town was too big a one for me to confine myself to him, and this gave me a chance to go out and work on other people—a thing which perhaps I would not have done if he had not turned me down.

“After I had finished with this customer, I took my little bundle under my arm and went in to see the first man I had called on. I did nothing with him beyond getting a promise that he would go into my house when

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he went into market. Of course I did not value that in itself as amounting to anything, because a man is in luck if one promise of this kind in a hundred is fulfilled. Yet I was satisfied to make his acquaintance. Before my supper appointment I made a couple more calls, but I didn't put very much heart in them as I had already got two good-sized orders and a jag and had prospects for the night. That was where, however, I should have kept on plugging just the same. There is no use in a man rushing away from one town that is not well worked only to get into another to do the same careless trick over again. I sold my two men after supper and was packed up by twelve o'clock. That day I made ten calls, had four customers in my sample room—no two of whom I handled alike—and next morning I left at five o'clock."

"You didn't hustle that hard when you were in college either, did you, son?" asked the furnishing goods man of Joannis Carolus.

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“The boys on the road must make many turns to get business,” started in a retail merchant from the West, who had joined the group. “I remember one fellow whom I just simply couldn’t turn down. He came into my store the morning before Christmas. Just as he began talking to me, three or four customers came in. He himself took right hold of one man and sold him a complete outfit. Then he waited on a lady and sold her a lot of stuff. We were all busy and do you know that fellow kept that up all day long, never saying a word about his own business, except occasionally throwing in a little side remark and joking about the corsets he sold. When all was quiet that night he came at me in a very straightforward manner and said: ‘I have been very pleased to be with you to-day. It is a day I expected I would lose entirely, and it has done me good, too, to get in touch with the retail trade again. I used to be behind the counter myself a good

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many years ago. Now, I haven't very much to say about my line except this: If you haven't bought any corsets you can use a few. I have managed during the day to take the sizes on your stock and why can't we squeeze in just a few minutes to-night? I can get all the stuff you need right here in your store and go over it with you. I shall, furthermore, be very happy to come here as often as is necessary and size up your stock and keep it in good shape for you.'

" 'Well, now, those samples are entirely unnecessary,' said I. I had complete confidence in him. 'Send me what you think I need,' and do you know, that man has had all my business in his line ever since."

"And I suppose," said the clothing man, "that his house didn't think he was working very hard that day."

"Well, that is where the house was wrong," replied the merchant. "No man on earth works as hard as the man on the road,

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and mingled in with their hard work there is always, with the successful ones, a spirit of fairness and good cheer. Yes, sirree! These wholesale houses may say what they please, but a good representative goes a long, long ways with us merchants. It is good representatives on the road for a house that really build the business. Put that in your pipe and smoke it, Johnnie."

CHAPTER V.

HANDLING THE CUSTOMER

AFTER returning from New York to Chicago and helping get up a line of samples, Joannis Carolus started on the road as a helper for his father's leading salesman, Watkins. The first town they struck was Lincoln, Nebraska. They reached there late at night. Joannis Carolus registered at the Lincoln Hotel as "J. Charles" Witherspoon. When Watkins saw the name written this way on the register, he winked at the smooth-shaven, wise clerk and remarked in a low voice, "First trip, Sam. Let the bell boy show us up right away. Ice water, please, and six-thirty calls. Good night, old man."

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J. Charles and Watkins had adjoining rooms, a door between. By the time they were in their pajamas, the bell boy came down the hall, the ice clinking against the pitcher. Watkins sent out his trousers to be pressed, and also those of "J. Charles." As the bell boy left with the clothes on his arm, Watkins said something to him, quietly, and slipped half a dollar into his palm.

Next morning when the clothes came back, J. Charles came into Watkins's room and said, "Why, what do you think that abominable tailor has done? Instead of pressing my trousers properly, he has taken the creases out of them."

"So he did! And I gave the bell boy half a dollar extra to have it done before you went to breakfast. Now, look here, my boy, your father thinks nearly as much of me as he does of his brother. Just before you and I left his store he took me into his office and said

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to me, 'Now, I am going to turn my boy over to you. He is just out of college and you know he has a whole lot to learn, and I want you to help him along all you can, and, if necessary be very blunt with him.' Now, I tell you, you want to get over this 'J. Charles' business right away—this humping up your name in the middle like a camel's back. Just make up your mind right from the jump to be 'Johnnie'—just plain Johnnie. It is all right to dress neatly and nicely, but this putting on 'dog on the road won't do. You walk into a store and you may find that the clerk who has been there for ten years and is drawing eighteen a week may have his trousers nicely creased, as you wanted yours to be, but when you get back into the office and find the man who really does the business, you will also find his trousers a little baggy at the knee.

"Now, let's slide right along and get some breakfast. This first time I will go with you

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to the sample room and show you how to open up."

When the goods were displayed Watkins left J. Charles in the sample room and went down the street to make an engagement with his man. This customer, who was a regular one, and the only one he sold in that town, was to come up promptly at one o'clock. After a man has been on the road for a number of years he has his trade pat. He knows in most towns exactly where he is going to do his business and just about how long it will take him. After Watkins made his engagement, he spent an hour or two, as his customer had requested, in taking a general look through the stock with his clerks, at the same time having a pleasant word to say to all of them—two mighty good things for a man on the road to do. He should by all means keep in touch with his customer's business so that he may know how to go about waiting on him in the sample room. The man who knows

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what his customer is in the habit of selling is in a great deal better position to wait upon him than if he were a stranger to the stock. It is in this way that the traveling man keeps a good hold on his trade.

Promptly at one o'clock, Brewster, the merchant friend, with his lists all made out, walked into the sample room—yes, *promptly at one*. Good merchants, the traveling man must know right from the start, are just as anxious to buy goods as he is to sell them. Brewster and Watkins worked the entire afternoon—the dry goods line is a tedious one anyway. When dinner time arrived they had not quite finished their business, and Brewster, in order to let Watkins leave on the early morning train, was good enough, as merchants nearly always are, to take dinner with him and finish buying that evening. They did not have a great deal more to do and did not hurry with dinner. At the table, along with J. Charles, Brewster, and Wat-

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kins, sat three of the boys on the road, a necktie man, a grocery man, and one who sold furnishing goods. Watkins told Brewster, as they washed their hands, about the old man's son; that J. Charles was fresh out of college, and that his father had sent him along so that he could learn a little something about business.

With this in his mind, as they sat at the table, Brewster, between soup and fish, began: "Well, I tell you, gentlemen, I am the only victim here at the table, so I'll confess that the great thing in handling a customer is the right kind of an approach. When a stranger comes up to me, I don't like him to introduce himself, tell me what his name is, and hand me out a cigar—but I like for him to tell me *what his business is*. Of course, the cigars come in all right in their place, but when they are forced in, they don't make a very good entering wedge. The way is to make a square stroke in the center of your log, and set your

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wedge straight and hard. You can chop your splinters all right with a few fancy light strokes after the log is fairly split. You all know Gaylord, selling underwear, do you not? "

" The smoothest ever! " responded one of the boys.

" Yes, you bet your life," continued Brewster, " and no wonder that fellow's a success. You can't get away from him. He doesn't press matters upon you, but he puts them at you so straight and slick that he can get about any man he wants into his sample room. When I first knew him he was with a jobbing house. I bought goods from him then. After that he went into manufacturing himself and I continued to buy from him. The other day he came around and I bought still another bill.

" When he first came around representing a jobber, he put up the best argument for a jobber that I ever heard. When he went in

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for himself he told me he would give my business his especial attention—and I knew he would. When he came out last time—why, he was here only the other day—he said to me frankly: ‘Well, Brewster, I tried it myself, but I am perfectly frank about it—I didn’t have enough capital to swing the business, and I thought I’d get out of it before I lost all I had. I am making a good thing of it on the road as it is. I have nothing to risk and my commissions are sure. You know full well that, knowing the business as I do, I would not bring you out a shabby line. A man nowadays must have merchandise when he goes to approach good trade.’

“I really wasn’t exactly in the notion of buying from a new house. I don’t like to take on new accounts anyway, and I told him this—and, do you know, that fellow agreed with me? He said: ‘You are just exactly right, Brewster. Under ordinary circumstances I do not think that a merchant does

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himself justice by opening new accounts. It is an injury to him, and he should not do so if he can avoid it.'

"He agreed with me—did not rub my fur up the back at all—and I did have the warmest kind of a feeling for him, and then he came around so smoothly that I couldn't feel the jolt. He said: 'Yes, sir; a man shouldn't open a new account unless there is some especial reason for it. I believe though' (ah! that is where he got in his work) 'that I have a reason for you, Mr. Brewster.' You know, he never gets too familiar, and most of us like this. 'I have something which will especially interest you. The trade, you know, is going very fast toward union suits. I felt this when I was in business myself, but I didn't have the money to put my ideas into merchandise. Before going with this firm I am now with, I talked the tendency of the trade over with them, and they quite agreed with me that a good line of unions would be

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a good thing for their business. While we may be along with the others on the two-piece garments, they have made for me what I believe you will find to be the best line of union suits on the road.'

"Confound that fellow! He knew exactly, without reminding me, that the union suit was my weak spot, and when he said, 'Maybe you can find a little time to run up with me to-day,' I made an engagement with him in a second. And then he walked right out."

"I don't like to be personal," spoke up one of the boys, "but it's a good rule anyway to duck right after you get an engagement."

"Yes, that's true," answered Brewster. "We merchants always like to be courteous to the boys who come around to see us—most of us are, I believe—yet at the same time there are a whole lot of men on the road who don't seem to realize that we have a whole lot to do besides visiting. He sold me the

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unions all right, and when we got around to the two-piece garments, he was perfectly frank. He said, 'I think you can find a whole lot of lines in this stuff that are as good as mine; yet at the same time, perhaps you don't feel like splitting up your business. Maybe you would like to let the tail go with the rest of the hide.' And he approached me so smoothly about the two-piece suits that I gave him an order for them."

"Well, by being square with you," remarked Watkins, "he got your business."

"Yes," began the hat man, "and after a good front when you first meet a man, the next important step in salesmanship is to get his confidence. I shall never forget one time when I was out in San Francisco. A couple of Assyrians, who were in the retail business, came in from towns out in the country to meet me. They picked up a certain brand of hat with which all merchants are familiar, and a certain style, and asked me how much it was

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worth. My samples were all marked in plain figures, and I merely showed him the tag on which the price was marked, \$31.50. When I showed them the price they talked for a minute or two with each other. At the start of their conversation I heard them mention the name of a firm they had been dealing with, and I also caught the words, '*sitta-wetelatin*' (thirty-six). I didn't know very much about their language, but when I used to be a clerk in Chicago I had dealt with a good many of these people, and you know it's always a mighty good thing for a clerk, or a man on the road either, to know a little something of the language of any customer with whom he has to deal. While I did not understand all that they said, it was clear to me one had told the other that he had paid the old house he had been dealing with \$36 a dozen for the same thing for which I asked only \$31.50.

"They tried to get me down or, rather, to

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find that I would not come down, and then each of them gave me a good order. They had confidence in my price because they could see very plainly that my goods were lower than the other fellow's, and I had their confidence because I would not come down."

"You bet! The thing to do in handling a customer is to get his confidence," began the necktie man, "and the next thing to do is to hold his confidence. I've been going over my territory for a good many years and I flatter myself that I have as solid a line of customers as any man out in this country. I know, to be honest about it, that there are lots of lines of goods that are on a par with mine, and there is no reason why my customers, as far as values of goods are concerned, might not as well buy their goods elsewhere. At the same time, my customers stick to me."

"I wish I had my trade as solid as you have," remarked the hat man.

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“ Ah! Come off, Fred! ” exclaimed Watkins.

“ Well, I try to treat my trade right,” continued the necktie man. “ Now, for instance, I was up in the Black Hills last time just about the time I was winding up. I was about a week late and my customer had been waiting for me to buy some Fourth of July neckties. He was running very short on them. When I reached town I didn’t even have time to telegraph in and get some stuff out to him. I was really very sorry about this, for he had been a faithful customer; in fact, had given me every cent in his line. I was lucky, though, in having quite a number of ‘outs,’ so, after he had given me his regular bill, I not only put the outs in a pile but threw on top of them a whole lot more samples I could spare. You know I carry my line all made up instead of trying to work the confidence game and getting my customers to buy from swatches—small

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samples no bigger than the palm of your hand.

“The prices on the samples ranged from \$4.50 to \$6 a dozen, and there were a few \$9 goods among them. ‘Now, look here,’ I said to my customer, ‘you have been deucedly square with me, and have been waiting for me. I can’t get you out anything in time for the Fourth, but I’ll just let you have this bunch of samples over here. They will help you out a good deal. Are they worth anything to you?’ ‘I can use them in my sale. They are worth \$4 a dozen to me,’ he answered. ‘They would make a bully good fifty cent line.’ ‘Well, I can’t let you have them at that price,’ I answered, but you may have them at \$3.50.’ There were nine dozen in all. I would just as soon have gone down into my friend’s pocket and taken out \$4.50 as to have charged him \$4 a dozen for those ties, because my customary price on samples was only \$3.50.”

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“Well, it isn’t everybody that will appreciate a thing like that,” remarked the grocery man. “I know I once struck a fellow who wanted to buy an opening bill in my line. He had been carrying clothing and dry goods and everything of that sort, but didn’t know anything about my business. He wanted to put in a line with which to fight a competitor who had been an exclusive grocer, but who had put in a general line of goods. I was making a special trip on pipes that time and had a large case of samples with me. These I had in the back end of his store, so when we got down to pipes—I had rather made an estimate of all the other stuff for him—I thought it best for him to pick out the line. Just as I had spread out the samples on the counter a messenger boy came in and told me that a man from a neighboring town wanted me at the telephone. I was gone at the telephone office about half an hour, and when I returned my customer

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had laid out enough pipes for an exclusive store on Broadway. 'Well, give us about a dozen each of these, I guess,' he said. 'We have a big Irish settlement west of here.' 'Well, Irish or no Irish,' I replied, 'you don't want all of these pipes. If you will cut down about half of them and say six each that would be a little more like it,' and I cut down his pipe order at least three-fourths. And, do you know, I never sold that son of a gun another sou. After that I made up my mind that I would let a man have all he wanted."

"Well, you can work your game as much as you please," remarked the necktie man. "While I may lose out a little once in a while that way I am going to keep on playing the old system, and if a customer wishes to order from me a little more than I really think he needs I am going to suggest to him that he need not take so much."

"And you will find," remarked Brew-

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ster, "that to be the right system. I know in my buying I like to have the salesman who is waiting on me make suggestions. Now, I must not only buy dry goods from Watkins and Johnnie here" (Johnnie smiled) "and underwear from Gaylord, but a dozen more lines of goods. The salesmen on the road are specialists in their lines of business, and I find that they help me a great deal. Once in a while I find a fellow who wants to ram me full, but he injures himself when he does so because I won't let the same dog bite me twice."

"I have one customer," spoke up the hat man, "who, when I first struck him, was loaded to the guards with goods. He bought a bill from me and I cut it down hard after he had given me the order. Now, for three years I haven't even carried my trunks to that man's town. I go in there in the evening and go out early the next morning. The last time I went to his place my train was three

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hours late. I did not reach there until nine o'clock but still my man was waiting for me at the hotel. He took me down to his store. We went through his stock that night, thus saving me a whole day."

"Well, you can handle some customers that way," remarked the furnishing goods man, as the waiter took away the plate of fish bones and placed before him a lettuce and tomato salad, "but not all of them. I have many who let me pick out their goods for them, but I have one that I leave absolutely alone. You cannot handle every customer alike. When I first struck this man and told him my business he said: 'Now, I'll buy some goods from you if you'll just let me have my way. The fellow I've been dealing with always wants to buy for me. My money is to pay for what I buy and I want to have the fun of picking it out.'

"So I had my trunks thrown in his store after supper, and when I opened my samples

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so they could be got at I took a seat down by the stove and literally left this man and his clerk to pick out the bill. He went through the stuff a line at a time, throwing out what he wanted, and as he finished with one line he would call to me to write it down. That's the way I've been selling him ever since. In handling a customer there's a great deal in finding out how he, himself, likes to be handled."

"Did you ever strike a fellow," asked Watkins, "who had a spite against one of the landlords in town and would not buy goods from you if you stopped at that man's hotel? I run across a snag of that kind every once in a while."

"Well, what do you do, Watkins?" asked Brewster, the merchant.

"I try to make peace if I can. If I cannot do that, unless my customer is an old one and has good cause for a grudge, I usually hunt some one else to do business

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with. In a case of this kind you can count on it that it is easier to find a new customer than to pack up your samples and move to another hotel. As a rule, I like to do business with a man who has a hobby. If I can find out what a man's hobby horse is I always try to jump up behind, but I do draw the line at a fellow who won't deal with you because you stop at the wrong hotel. His hobby horse is too weak-backed to tote double."

"Yes, but it's a good idea to stand in with your customer," remarked the grocery man.

"But it is better," replied Brewster, "to have your customer feel that he should *stand in with you*. Yes, sir, in handling your customer it is always best for you, if possible, to accept a favor, rather than to give one."

"And there is another thing that a man must not do," began Watkins. "It is forgetting an old customer who has gone out

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of business. Once in a while a merchant will come to feel that he would rather feed a thrashing machine when the thermometer is 104, than measure calico. But after they sell out to try something else for a while, nine times out of ten they go back into business, and when they do they will always appreciate the man who remembered them when they had no goods to buy.

“I used to have a customer who finally sold out his store and started to raising chickens. For three years, every time I visited his town, I would ring him up on the phone and have him come in and take dinner with me or else go out to his house and take a squint at his Domineckers. He would invariably say to me: ‘Watkins, confound you, you know I appreciate a little visit with you! A whole lot of the boys who were good fellows when I bought goods have dropped me now that I’m not in the business—one by one, until there are only a few of them left.

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I'm going to fool a big bunch of them pretty soon. I'm getting tired of whitewashing hen houses to keep the mites away, and I think next spring I shall start up a business shack like I used to have. That's when some of the boys will come back and want to be sweet again, but just watch me give a few of them the wrinkled brow! ' "

" Ah, you bet! " exclaimed the furnishing goods man. " The right thing to do in handling your customer is to be a man with him—just a man—that's all. I think a great deal of a man who gives me his business. A man's heart and his pocketbook are not far apart.

" Mr. Brewster, you know we boys on the road become very much attached to many of our customers. The traveling man and his customers, after many years of dealing, draw close to one another. Of course we oft-times get a hard bump on the head from those we think to be our friends, and I, my-

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self, try to avoid too close a friendship with my customers. At the same time, I cannot help it once in a while. Now, take a case like this: I had a man who had given me more or less of his business for two or three years, but one year he had just about cut me out altogether; so when I went out to Omaha, which wasn't far from where he is in business, instead of going to his town, I dropped him a line. I thought he was going to pass me up anyhow and, you know, when we don't wish to make a town or think there is nothing in it, we write or phone a customer."

"That's a good way to lose one, too," put in Watkins.

"Sure thing," continued the furnishing goods man. "Write a man or phone him if you want to lose him. Well, a reply came addressed in a lady's hand. My customer's wife wrote me that her husband was sick in the hospital in Omaha. She was at the hos-

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pital with him. I got the letter only an hour or so before my train left. I had my ticket bought and sleeper paid for and I had been away from home for about three months. I couldn't go out to the hospital, but I did go down to the florist's and sent out a nice bunch of flowers to my customer's wife and wrote her a note, saying I trusted her husband would soon be up and on his feet again. That was just a simple thing to do and I would have done this just the same had this man been in the drug business instead of in my line. The next time I was in Omaha, I found a letter from this man asking me to phone him. I did so and he came down and bought from me his complete bill of goods."

CHAPTER VI

HARD FALLS AND HOW THEY HAPPEN

AFTER dinner, J. Charles, the boss's son, went up against the real thing.

Along with Watkins, his father's leading salesman, for whom he was packer, Brewster, the customer, and their three traveling men friends, he had lingered rather long over the small black; and Monty, the head waiter, had softly closed the eight o'clock doors before the party laid their crumpled napkins upon the table and left the dining room. Watkins was yet to sell a tedious bill of dry goods and the fourteen trunks were to be packed that night as he and J. Charles were to go to Crete on the 12.30 A.M. train.

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"Come into my sample room, folks. I think I have a little better cigar than you can find downstairs. I threw in a couple of boxes of my favorites as we were packing up the other day in Chicago. There are a few of them left." Watkins passed a box around, first to Brewster, and then to his other friends. They all took one, but when they came to J. Charles, this young man said, "No, thanks," and pulled out his cigarette case. "Nope—nope, Johnnie—none of that. You had better take that thing and send it back to one of your fraternity friends at Harvard. It isn't a very good thing to use on the road. You'd better make a bluff at a cigar." All this was quickly and quietly said. "You may go to work packing that trunk of blankets over there and the rest of the stuff against the wall. We are all through on that side of the house."

The traveling men friends soon left, as they saw he had business to do—the necktie

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and furnishing goods men to pack their own samples.

Watkins worked quickly and quietly. Instead of spreading out a whole line of a certain sort of stuff, he would merely pick out a few of them and say to his customer, "Here, these are about the best of this bunch," and Brewster would say, "Yes, I think so, too," and Watkins would write down the order and go on to something else. By ten o'clock they had finished and J. Charles had packed seven of the trunks. He was doing first rate for a green hand, but when the veteran got at it he filled the other seven in comparatively few minutes. All three then went into the lobby, having two delightful hours to spend, such as come into the life of the man on the road. There was nothing to do but wait for the train. The old timer's grip is always packed and ready to go and his order is usually written up when he closes a bill.

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"Now, sit with us a while," said Watkins to Brewster. "You're a little tired, anyway, I expect." "All right, I will. The folks at home know I am with you and in good hands." Soon another knot of men of commerce sat together in the lobby. "Well, how do you like the road by this time, Johnnie?" asked Brewster of the young man.

"Oh, bully! I think it's great," said he.

"It's all right when you have an easy mark like me, Johnnie; but it doesn't come so easy when you strike them all, eh—does it, Wat?"

"Well, I should say not! We all, once in a while, even the best of us, get a hard fall. About the hardest tumble ever I knew a fellow to get was once down in St. Louis. A dry goods man named Cook (he's quit the road and gone into business for himself now) used to travel down in Louisiana. He had one especially solid customer down in the Bayou district. Cook had been raised in a

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little town in Mississippi. He ran a little store of his own and sang bass in the Baptist choir. He was a straightforward, honest fellow—lacked a good deal of being a fool—but he did too much credit business with his brethren and by'm bye the bank clerk began to come around pretty frequently with sight drafts."

"You bet, it's a shaky old time, too," said Brewster. "I've been there!"

"Finally Cook went broke. A friend of his in the shoe business on the road was one of Cook's creditors. In order to help Cook along and also, perhaps, to get his money back, he found him a job with a St. Louis dry goods house. Cook was as green as a tobacco worm when he first started out—smoked a cob pipe and carried a blacking brush in his grip. One thing in his favor was he kept down expenses, and whenever he got a chance to turn loose that bass voice of his in a Sunday school he would usually land

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a big bill the next day if any of the merchants were present. In the course of a good many years he had sprinkled that voice around in a good many places and had a fair list of faithful customers.

“The little village in which he grew up was a quiet place. Occasionally the young plantation singers would go to meeting, stir up a scrap and carve each other with razors, but in that town no one flashed a pistol. One season, while Cook was in St. Louis looking after his market trade, one of his Sunday-school superintendent customers came up to the city. His little town, also, was a quiet burg and the superintendent, while at home, would talk to his lady customers in a low voice and say grace at the table, but when he got up to the city he would invariably take a tire or two off from the water wagon, fill a couple of hind pockets with 44's and talk loud.

“One night Cook took his Mississippi

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friend to the theater. Although he had been in market for a few seasons this was a luxury in which he seldom indulged, so he was not very well up on the stars. Well, what do you think he took his Southern friend to see? 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'! I am not familiar with the play myself, but I know there is a place in it where there is a sort of a slur thrown on Southern women. When they came to this part of the play—although everything had been going on pretty smoothly up to this time—the man from Louisiana began to froth at the mouth. He got up in his chair and drew out his brace of 44's and said: 'Now, look hyar—I have stood all this kind of business that I'm goin' to. I've kept quiet as long as I can. When you've gone as far as this, you're goin' to stop—and stop right now! I want you to understan' that I'm from the Bayoux of old Louisiana,' and with this he leveled his guns at the stage.

"I wasn't there, but they tell me the

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actors made about the swiftest change of scene that ever occurred in St. Louis. A couple of policemen started down the aisle, but the crowd was with the man from the Bayoux and they checked the cops. This broke up the show and when the whole thing quieted down, the superintendent looked around for his friend, Cook, but Cook had ducked. And, do you know, I hardly blame Cook for getting out of the way, but that little theater party cost him a big bill and a good customer."

"Notwithstanding the bass voice?" broke in Brewster.

"I once got it good and hard myself," began one of the boys who sold duck clothing and overalls. "I used to think the definition of salesmanship was handing a man a bunch, and I am free to confess that I have been guilty of doing this a few times, although I hadn't been at my job a great while before I learned better. Last time I did a trick of

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this kind was up in Vancouver, B. C. I was out making a special trip for our coast man. I wanted to see the country anyhow, and as he was sick I made his territory for him. While I was up on the Puget Sound, I thought I might as well run across the line and make Vancouver and Victoria. I had never been in a foreign land and wanted to know how it felt. This was about the time of the Klondike boom. You know there are some people who think when a thing starts it is going to last forever. There are a lot of merchants that you go into on the morning of the Fourth of July and could sell them a carload of firecrackers just because they have been having a big trade in them. Well, I struck one man of this kind over in Vancouver. The Klondike rush was on and he had cleaned out all of the duck clothing he had. You know, in that business, the coats and vests and pants are sold separately, and that there is a great deal bigger demand for

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the coats—three or four times over—than for the vests and pants.

“When my Canadian friend looked at my samples, he would pick up a coat and ask me the price of a suit. I had to scratch my head and figure a little, but I always managed to get out a suit price for him all right. When he began to buy he bought so many suits of this and so many suits of that. I remember my bill on that stuff alone amounted to \$1,920. I felt like I was pretty near stealing from him when I took this order, but I thought I wouldn't have to go back to that place again, and I let them come just as he wanted them—but it's funny how everything works out.

“The next trip I made to that country—you see, I had meantime taken on the Northwest for my house—I walked into a store in Seattle, and who should I find in there but the man I had filled up to the guards in Vancouver. Well, you know the rest! I forget

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how big a discount he did give to get rid of those pants and vests when he sold out."

"You bet your life, you will sleep against the slats if you crop the wings of the goose that feathers your nest. I once got the worst of it with a customer in a little different way," remarked the furnishing goods man, taking up the conversation. "You see, we have two especial brands of shirts. Well, in one of the towns I go to I had two customers—one of them using one brand and the other, the other.

"Things got along pretty peaceably with me for three or four years until finally one of my customers opened up a store in another town. Just before I reached his place the house had sent me samples of several lines of goods which they wished to close. You know, when lines run short or sizes get a little broken the house likes to clean up. They gave me a very low price on these lots if I would clean them up before stock-taking.

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So I went in to this customer who had started this store in the other town and showed him this job lot. There were some of both my advertised brands in this lot, about as many of one as of the other. He bought the whole bunch. I explained to him, though, that I would not ship to the town where I had my other customer any of the brands he was handling.

“Well, you know how when a bill is made and marked for future shipment that you forget little details like this. This customer saw that he didn’t need any of this job lot goods in his new store and ordered the whole works shipped to his other place. He was very innocent about it; in fact, he had forgotten all the little details about the line. When the goods came in and the manager in his old store saw that he had in the house the same brand of shirts that my other customer in the town was selling at the regular price on them, he, without consulting the old man

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at all, stuck an advertisement in the newspapers: '—— brand shirts, 69 cents; same kind that other merchants in this town have been selling for \$1.50. Just arrived this week. No old stuff. Nice fresh goods.' ”

“ Well, I guess you were in for it,” broke in Watkins.

“ Well, was I? You bet. After that I got it in the neck. I not only lost one customer, but two. The man who had been carrying one of my brands dropped them to be sure; and so did the other fellow, because he ran the price down so that he couldn't afford to buy goods at the regular price and sell them that low.”

“ I threw a fellow a good fall a couple of trips ago,” spoke up the shoe man. “ I'll tell you. . A competitor of mine got off a certain town the same hour I did. In the place ahead I had landed a hard blow on him, the trip before, and he felt it. When he saw me in this town he grew anxious to get into the next

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one, so up he came to his solid customer and told him the circumstances—I afterwards learned—and said: ‘Look here, now I know pretty well what you are using and I want to get ahead of my competitor down here at this next place. Can’t you kind of just let me run through stock for you and I’ll give you an open order without opening samples; then I can take a team and drive out to this next place and head him off.’ Well, his customer gave him an order of about \$240. This was a great deal less than he was in the habit of buying, but my competitor was satisfied with this, thanked him, and said he would get the rest of it on his filling-in trip.

“Now, I always worked a little differently from this. With very few exceptions, when I want to sell a man, I want to show a man; and I aim to get through with my business in the town I am in before I go to the next one. I didn’t even telephone my man in the next town because it wouldn’t do to seem too

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anxious, you know. He had had my card a day or two before and I made up my mind that that was good enough. My competitor had his trunks on the wagon and was driving off just as I came from opening the samples. I went over to see the man he had just left. He tried to joke me a little, told me what had happened and how my competitor had got ahead of me; but I turned the joke on him quick as a flash. 'Well, don't you want to see the line that he is afraid of?' 'Gad! I guess I'll have to look after that.' And do you know, that fellow went through his stock with me real carefully, sizing up and filling in, and I sold him \$750."

"Hm—hm," remarked Brewster, "this rushing business doesn't always pay."

"Except when you're through with your business and packing samples," said J. Charles dryly.

"That's a good one, Johnnie, my boy," exclaimed Brewster.

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"It's funny how even a little thing will knock you once in a while," began the duck goods man. "You know I used to be a sort of general utility man in my house. They batted me around into almost any territory they pleased, for a while. I knew one of their men, down in Arkansas, who had an idea that it was his moral duty to buy all the booze and put his finger marks on every poker chip in the State. He got to borrowing from customers, so it was up to me, all of a sudden, to finish his trip. Good fellow, too—he was a prince of a fellow—but a little too curious about making combinations with the paste boards. He had, however, several warm friends. He got on a toot in Little Rock and sold all his samples to a kike. I didn't find this out until I went down there. Then I wired the house to express me a fresh line.

"You know, our overall line is very strong" (Brewster was a possible customer

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and the duck goods man was working in a very good line of talk). "The line looked nice and fresh when I spread it out, and I was sure I would land a good order. I went up to see our old customer and, just as easy as sliding down the bank of an old creek, he said, 'Yes, sir, I'll certainly be very glad to come over at any time you specify.' I made an appointment for the afternoon, knowing that it wouldn't do to hurry things down in that country. I had heard everybody who came into the old gentleman's store call him Colonel—and I soon tumbled to this. At two o'clock I went over to the store and said, 'Colonel, I am at your service, sir.' 'Very well, I will go right along with you.'

"As we walked over to the hotel, the old gentleman was communicative. He talked in the flowery language typical of the South. When he walked into the sample room, though, his stream of honeyed words at once ceased to flow. He pulled at his whiskers

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with one hand and flashed a goose quill toothpick out of his pocket with the other and stuck it in his teeth. I saw him come down on it rather hard with his jaws. To jolly the old gentleman up a little I offered him a cigar. 'No, thank you, sir,' said he. I knew there was something wrong—and sure enough, in just a minute he turned on his heel and started to walk out. Still, he couldn't leave the room without making an explanation.

"'Look here, suh,' said he. 'Do you know, suh, that I was a Cun'l in the Confed'rate army, that for foh long years I followed, suh, the Stars and Bars. During all this time I heard the cannon roar and the minie balls hiss, and my men under me and myself drank coffee made out of parched sweet potatoes; and often for weeks at a time, suh, fed on mast, the food of hogs. I cannot forget it, suh. Can't forget it. A man like me who woh the gray—and here

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you come and try to sell me merchandise for my stoh with these hyah samples'—and with this the old gentleman did walk out.

“You know the boy who looked after that department up in the house had sent me samples of blue overalls, instead of gray! I went up and rather squared things with the old gentleman as best I could, but that day, sure's you're born, I went away from that town skunked.”

“I was dropped last season, on a mighty good count, too, over in Kansas,” commented the boys' and children's clothing man. “I had been selling my man there for three or four years. Just about twelve months ago when I was there, after I had taken my order and the proprietor himself had returned to the store, leaving his buyer to wait and bring along the copy, the buyer picked out a suit for his little boy. I put it on the bill and instructed the house to send out the suit complimentary. You know there are a great

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many buyers and business men themselves, even, who rather expect that sort of thing, but you'll never catch me doing a trick of that kind again. When I came around this season, the old man was red-headed. He told me he didn't like to have anything sent to any of his men without their paying for it; so now I've made up my mind that I'll never enter an item on a bill and not charge even the customer himself for it, unless he especially asks me to do so."

"It's mighty hard on a fellow to lose a solid customer that way," remarked the furnishing goods man. "I had a bitter taste of this several years ago when I quit my old house. I had an idea that I owned my trade. Another house offered me a raise of \$600 in guaranteed salary, and I went with them. I not only lost out on one man, but with several; but losing one particular customer really hurt me hard. I thought we were the very best of friends and that by all means he

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would give me his business when I changed. I counted on him because we had been very closely associated with each other.

“When I first opened the account he was slow with my firm, and they would not have shipped him had I not strongly recommended the account. My firm, at my suggestion, broke one of their iron-clads, and lapped bills on this man.”

“Lapped bills?” asked the young college man. “What do you mean by that?”

“Oh, merely shipping one bill before a previous one has been paid for. Yes, the firm lapped bills on him. In addition to this, at one time he was wanting a clerk. I found a good man for him. In fact, this man proved so satisfactory that the old man let him buy a great many of the goods. I thought I surely had a cinch on this account. I had been pulling against the tide for a whole week before I struck that town. Knock-down after knock-down landed on me,

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but I felt sure I would even things up when I went to see my loyal old friend. I ordered my trunks sent over to his store—this always suited my customer—just as soon as I got off the train. When I went in I didn't say anything about business right at the start, but I talked about one thing and another. I noticed that my old customer acted a little peculiarly, and I couldn't understand it until the drayman dumped my trunks off in front of the store and started to roll them in.

“ ‘ I am awfully sorry to tell you,’ said my old friend, ‘ but I wish you had saved the expense of having those trunks brought over. I have bought my goods from the old house. I can't go back on them. True, you helped me to get credit when I needed it badly, but I feel that I owe the house more for giving me the credit and standing back of me in other ways than I owe you for suggesting such action. I'm sorry to have to choose between the house and yourself, but I must.’

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"I don't believe I ever had quite such a setback as that in my life. I tried to say that it was all right. I knew it would do no good to beef, but something kind of choked me and I couldn't talk plainly. There I had got credit for this man when he really needed it very badly. I had favored him in many ways. I had even found a man a job in his store, who picked out goods from the other fellow—my very strongest competitor. I wanted to turn loose and give them both a good rub down, but I merely said, 'Well, I'll have the stuff taken out of your way.' Yes, sir; when a man goes to changing houses and thinks he can carry all of his trade with him, he is mighty sure to have a good many hard fall-downs."

Here the shoe man remarked: "I had a great experience a few weeks ago, just before I started on this trip. One of my competitors sent me a mail order for nearly a thousand dollars. Yes, sir; a bully, good, nice,

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clean bill. I appreciate that order about as much as any I have ever had come to me in my life. It came about in just this way. Now, hold on, I'll just read my competitor's letter itself. I have it here in my pocket." With this the shoe man fingered through a big bunch of stuff from his pocket, and getting out the letter, read:

" 'MY DEAR SIR: Inclosed find order from Messrs. Bemis & Company. Kindly rush this out at once and mail them a catalogue so that they can order a few other things they wish. On your spring trip notify them when you'll be out at Deadwood, and they will come over and give you their order for their three other stores. There are four shoe men here to-day. I was placed in a position where I couldn't sell this account, and, knowing you personally, I recommended them to you rather than to any one of our competitors who are here to-day. Now, you may think it strange that I, who am in a

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great measure a stranger to you, should send you this order and put you onto these four accounts. But the reason why I do so is this: I have heard all over the territory that you have always spoken a kind word for me. These two men who are here in town to-day have to my certain knowledge tried to knock me more than once, and I am only too glad that I have to-day this chance to play even with at least one of them.' ”

“Ha! You bet those fellows got just exactly what they deserved,” observed Brewster. “The man will always lose out who runs down his competitor.”

“Yes,” the hat man remarked, “there is always a clear and simple reason for any failure on the road. I recall that when I used to be a stock boy a fellow came into the house who at once let us all know that he had taken a place in stock not to work hard, but to get a little knowledge of the business before he went out on the road. He

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had been a hatter at the bench and after that he worked for a few years in a retail store. As he would sling himself down the aisle, smoking his cigar carefully so that the pretty ash tip would not drop off, you could hear him saying to himself, ' Ah! I know all about this business. Watch me when I get started on the road! You won't see me selling any little half dozen jags! I'm a case lot man.'

" One day I saw an order blank that he had been scribbling on. He couldn't write anything less than three dozen at a time. Well, out started Mr. Pompous with two brand new trunks, full of nicely packed samples. This part of it was all very well and good—knowing how to take care of the line; but that week did not seem to carry him through. He was a little too proud to make a team trip and get his trunks muddy, and he couldn't drive into line the electric light town buyers. He lasted just one year. The swelled head and the I-know-it-all swing don't

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make a hit for a man when he goes on the road."

"No, sir; and another thing a man must do," said Watkins, casting an eye at his young packer, "is to take care of himself. Being a good fellow in moderation is all right for a man, but he can carry it too far. Take Harry Howe, for example."

"Well, what has become of Harry?" asked one or two of his old friends.

"He used to be a high roller all right. I remember seeing him one night, down in McCook, sitting around the green cloth with a gay party and plunging as much as fifty on a hand. I kind of had a hunch then that he couldn't booze and play poker all night, catch a few cat naps on the train, sell goods during the day, and hold up forever."

"Although he stood it out pretty long," continued Watkins, "old John Barleycorn and the bobtailed flushes finally landed him. You know his eyes were not very good any-

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way, and one of his old friends was telling me the other day that he had gone blind and was living out here in a little town with his sister, who runs a small millinery store."

"Poor old Harry!" exclaimed the shoe man. "He was a good boy. Isn't that hard on him?"

"Yes, it is hard," answered Watkins, "but if a man on the road wrestles night after night with high balls and poker chips, he might just as well count on getting a hard fall."

Big-voiced George called out, "Board! Board! B. & M. West—All Aboard."

Within a minute, Watkins and J. Charles were riding in the rattling bus toward the depot.

CHAPTER VII

THE MERCHANT BEHIND THE COUNTER

WATKINS, the traveling man, together with the son of his boss, who was going along with him to pack trunks, reached Crete, Nebraska, an hour's run west of Lincoln, at 1.30 A.M.

This time the young man wrote his name on the hotel register, "John C. Wither-
spoon." "That's a whole lot better, Johnnie," remarked Watkins, patting him on the back. "After a few more night trains and early calls I think you'll get down to the proper level. By the end of the trip I think you'll have it 'Jno. C.,' and before the year is out you'll make it as short as you can—
'J. C.' and write it fast at that."

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For the first month of his trip Watkins traveled at a lively pace. It is early in the season that the man on the road goes after the doubtful customers. He must hurry, then, however, never letting his customer know that he is hurrying. Often being even a day late will cost a salesman a big bill. The young college man caught onto his job and made a really good helper for Watkins. John C. was a worthy chip off the old block. What he needed was what he was getting—a chance to work.

The fifth Sunday out on the trip Watkins spent at Kansas. He was to be there for three days to wait on country customers to come in from surrounding towns. Two or three of these reached Kansas City on Sunday evening. They, with John C., Watkins, and some of his traveling men friends, sat in the lobby of the Baltimore Hotel.

“Do you know,” said Hoover, one of Watkins’s customers, “that I built my business

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by paying especial attention to children. For the ten years that I have been in my town I have always done something to bring them to me. The very first thing that I did when I started in new in my town was to have made a thousand foot rules. On them I had printed, 'Hoover makes it a rule to wait on the children with as much care as on grown people.' I first handed these out to a little group of kids from school who came in. The news soon spread and all the children in town came in droves for these rules. You know the mothers often send their children out to get some little thing, and I wanted to get them in the habit of going to Hoover's. I knew that if I had the children on my side the grown folks would soon fall into line."

"Well, you've made a success out where you are, too, Hoover," Watkins remarked.

"Yes, I have. You know it won't do for a merchant to expect to stay in a place and build a business, and mistreat his customer.

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People believed that if I would take care of children, I would also take good care of the grown folks. Two of the most successful retail business men in America—or in the world, for that matter—have built their business by following out the same plan, after a fashion, that I did—that is, by pleasing the customer. They are in the dry goods business mostly and when they started in their customers were wholly women. Now, one of these merchants used to have a country store away down in a little country town in Illinois. When he was a young man he got it into his head that he must satisfy his women customers. He made his clerks take especial care to wait on them, and he, himself, when he was behind his own little counter, always made it a rule to please the women. That made him the leading merchant of his town. He was a bright, progressive man and moved to Chicago, where he took a little narrow store on State Street. He carried out in the

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city the same plan that he had worked in the country. Each year his business grew until now he occupies a large part of a block and his business is up in the millions and increasing every day.

“ Well, you see, women are more or less helpless. If you please them, they will become your best friends—if you don’t, they will drive many customers away from you. And this other man that I speak of hit upon this very idea. He not only gave instructions that his clerks should please customers in the store, but that if the customer, after going home, did not like what she had bought, the goods might be returned and exchanged or money back. Just this thing alone helped this great merchant’s business more than any other thing. It gave people who went to deal at his store confidence in that store.”

“ Satisfaction guaranteed or your money back is a good motto for any establishment,” remarked Watkins.

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"But, once in a while, though, Watkins," Hoover continued, "this exchanging goods gives us who do it a great deal of trouble, and the women folks occasionally carry it to an extreme. Now, for example, a lady in fairly good circumstances came to my store the other day and wanted to exchange a brown hat that she had bought from me for a black one—and what do you suppose her excuse was? She said that her mother-in-law had been brought here to Kansas City to be operated on for appendicitis, that she was sure she was going to die, and that she would need a black hat to wear to the funeral."

"Well, you swapped all right, did you not?" asked Watkins.

"Yes—twice; the woman's mother-in-law lived through the ordeal of the knife and she swapped back for that brown hat again."

"No, sir; you can't afford to take advantage of any one who comes to buy anything

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from you whether the customer be man or woman," spoke up the Philadelphia clothing man.

"Right near our house on Broad Street are several cigar stores. When I first went to Philadelphia I dropped in one day on one of these places and asked for a good two-for-a-quarter cigar. The man behind the counter handed me out a box and I picked up two and gave him a quarter. The cigar didn't please me very well, but, you know, we are creatures of habit. If we go anywhere for anything, that is the place we will naturally go the second time. The next time I dropped in this store there was a young man behind the counter. I picked up a couple of these same cigars and threw down a quarter. He handed me back fifteen cents in change.

" 'Haven't you made a mistake?' I asked, 'in selling me these cigars for five cents apiece?' He said, 'Oh, no; they cost us \$35

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a thousand,' and you can bet your life that I never darkened that fellow's door again.

"At the next place I went into to get my cigars the man was very careful and took a box out of an ice chest and said to me as he passed them out: 'Here is a cigar that we pride ourselves on. We sell them pretty close at two for a quarter, but we like to give our customers satisfaction.' That man has my trade to this day. I not only buy cigars from him when I am in Philadelphia, but have him express them to me when I am out on the road. I have confidence in him."

"A man does not like to be done, and I'm not quite so easy as you are," began the cloak man. "I know just before Christmas last year I went in to buy a book for a young lady friend of mine. I had heard her say that she liked 'Lucile,' and I went into a book store to buy for her a nice copy. I was in quite a hurry. I usually buy my books, when I am at home, in Baltimore, from an

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old friend in the book business, but at that time I was in a great hurry. I asked the man for a copy of 'Lucile.' He showed me one and priced it to me at \$1.30. I asked him if he didn't have anything better. He fumbled around and finally brought out another book that looked more or less like the one he had shown me before and said, 'Here's a copy for \$2.50.' "

"Gave you what you were looking for?" asked Watkins.

"Yes, you bet. It so happened that before I went home I had to go down right near where my old friend in the book business was. Just for curiosity's sake I went in and asked to see a copy of 'Lucile.' He showed me the identical thing for which I had paid \$2.50, and his price, marked in plain figures, was \$1.20; and I didn't do a thing but go right back up to the other store—to the other man's place. His store was full of customers, and I told him that I wanted him to hand me

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back \$1.30. I told him that he had robbed me outright and that he should give me the money and give it to me quick. He hemmed and hawed for a minute and tried to get out of it, and I didn't give him very much time. I simply slung the book at his head and told him not only to take the \$1.30, but to take the book also and go to ——. Then I went and bought another copy from my friend."

"I don't like to deal with those two-priced fellows and I won't do it," the hat man remarked. "I know one evening, when it was colder than blazes and the wind was blowing down my collar and sending shivers along my spine—one of those raw, vile winds off from Lake Michigan—I went into a little store on Wabash Avenue to buy a muffler. I usually fight shy of these little joints, but it was after six o'clock and all the reputable stores were closed. I asked the man—he was running the store all by himself—to show me

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a muffler. As he passed it out to me—it seemed to be all right—I asked ‘how much,’ and reached in my pocket for the money. I was in a hurry. ‘The price of this one is \$1.50, but I will make it to you for a dollar,’ said he. ‘You won’t do any such a damn thing,’ I answered. ‘I don’t do business with people who will do it that way.’”

“That was the very reason why,” said Hoover, the merchant, “this man was able *by himself* to attend to all the business he had. The retail customer had absolutely demanded that the merchant mark his goods in plain figures, and sell them at one price. Why, do you know, it’s only during the last few years that this has become the custom with merchants, but people have demanded honest treatment, and the one who gives it to them is the one who gets the business.”

“Yes, we must mark our goods in plain figures when we do a retail business, and sell them at one price,” noted French, another of

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Watkins's customers; "but at the same time there is no reason why we shouldn't get a good round profit on a lot of the things we have. If we mark them in plain figures the people will think we are treating them right, so we might as well go ahead and get a profit. Now, for example, a man came to my town last season, direct from the mill, and I bought from him three thousand yards of assorted widths in lace at seven and one-half cents a yard. Watkins, that was the reason why I cut you out last trip. Now, when these goods came in—you see, I had bought them myself without talking it over with the young lady in that department—I didn't tell her what they cost, but merely said to her: 'Now, look here, you take these laces and sort them out and tell me what you think they will bring.'

"She said the very narrowest ones would bring twelve and a half cents and that the broadest would bring fifty cents a yard. I

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didn't tell her anything about what they cost, but said that we could afford to sell them at that price and I let her go ahead and sell them. Do you know, she cleaned out nearly all of those three thousand yards. Now, that's the way I believe in doing business."

Hoover, the other customer, grinned and quietly answered: "Well, that may be your way, but I do things a little differently." Hoover was a man who had a business in a smaller town than the other fellow. "Yes, sir; I do business a little differently. That fellow struck me, too, and I bought three thousand yards, but I marked it this way: the narrowest widths at seven and one-half cents—just what they had cost—and for the broadest I didn't ask more than twenty. Now, you've told me that you cleaned out nearly all that you had. I had to re-order twice.

"Of course, a merchant has a right to make a long profit out of a shaky article. A

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man has the right, in fairness to his customer, to make a long profit on short season goods for he should not carry over things that have gone out of style. Take, for example, ladies' hats. They change in style as often as we have a new moon—but it's a mighty poor practice. I don't believe a merchant should follow in the footsteps of an old merchant I once knew down in Kentucky where I was raised. During the war, when sugar was worth over twenty-five cents a pound, he bought a hogshead of it.

“He had two rules in business: one was never to sell anything on credit and the other was never to sell an article without a profit—and do you know, that when that old man died, twenty years after the war, he actually had a part of that hogshead of sugar that he had carried during that time. All at once sugar took a drop and nobody would buy it from him because he asked too much for it. Finally he bought more sugar and sold it,

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but he would never sell what was in that hogs-head for less than what it cost him. I say a man has a right to make a long profit on short season goods. He can do this and still be fair to his customer because when the season for things is past—take straw hats, for example—he must sell them below cost. But this gouging a customer will not win out.”

“You’re right there, Hoover,” remarked Watkins. “You’ve heard of Ed Wilson, who used to be in business away down in Alma, Nebraska, haven’t you?”

“Yes, I’ve heard of that fellow. A great many of the boys have spoken to me about him.”

“Yes, sir; Wilson was strictly business. He prided himself on keeping an appointment that he made to the minute. He bought goods quickly and if he bought anything at a low price—say a good, clean job lot at fifty cents on the dollar, he would give his cus-

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tomers the benefit of it. When he first started in business he nearly went broke at making long profits and giving long time. He took a tumble onto himself all at once and quit patronizing blank book men—no more ledgers for him. He turned as complete a business somersault as any man I ever knew. He is way out there in the hot wind country, but he has built up a big business. People know that Wilson sells stuff cheap, and they come through other towns to buy goods from him. When I first knew him his credit was no good. Now he not only discounts his bills, but makes additional discounts by anticipating payments. He owns a big mill and a bank. He is the most successful small retail merchant that I know of. He profited by taking the people into partnership with him."

The Philadelphia clothing man excused himself, but soon returned and passed around the cigars from a fresh box he had just re-

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ceived from the Philadelphia dealer. Said he:

“This treating your customer right will win out every time. I know a man who is the head of one of the largest catalogue mail order businesses in this country, but who began his career in this way: He would take cheap gold-plated watches and send them around, one to a place, to fictitious people. He would send, for example, to Henry Harrison, Beatrice, Nebraska; but there would be no Henry Harrison there. The express agent would, of course, write back that the parcel was not claimed. In billing the watch to this Henry Harrison, this man that I am telling you about would put on the express bill a valuation of \$50. The watch, I suppose, did not cost him more than \$4.25. When the express agent would write back that there was no such person as Henry Harrison there, he would get a reply saying that he himself might examine the watch, and that, as it had

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not been delivered, if he could sell the watch to somebody for \$50, he could make the profit of \$25. In other words, they would let him have the watch at wholesale price, \$25.

“ All the fools weren't dead, and out of this scheme this man made a good stake. Then he went into the mail order business. He was then not to deal in gold-plated, brass watches, but in stuff of which people could tell the value—and to deal with people that he would have to sell more than one bill of goods to, to hold their trade and to make his business a success. Then what became of his motto, ‘ A big bunch for your dollar? ’ He had to change his policy then.

“ While I don't believe that man is honest or liberal at heart, he sells goods to his trade at a low price because he has found out that by so doing he profits. That concern to-day is doing a business of perhaps twenty million dollars a year.”

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“ Another policy I have always adopted,” began Hoover, the merchant, “ is to advertise Hoover and not the other fellow. I want my own brands on my goods. I want my people to know that it is Hoover, and not some fellow in Chicago or Boston, that has put out good stuff. I do this also for self-protection, because I’ve seen my competitor come to grief more than once because he has sold branded goods. He carried, I know, a certain line of shoes on which he had built up quite a reputation. The price on them was stamped on the bottom, \$3.50. Now, you cannot keep people from getting goods when they want them. They can go to some of their friends in business in some other town if they want a certain line of ‘stuff, and buy it and have them ship it in. This is just what one of my competitor’s enemies in this town did. You know there is a sneak in nearly every town in the country. This fellow got a relative of his to buy and send

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to him a lot of the same shoes that my neighbor had advertised so long. What happened?

“The shoe that had been sold for \$3.50 for many years by one man was advertised in flaming letters by the other at \$3. The man who sold them at \$3.50 was, of course, compelled to meet the price, and he was driven to switch off from the line of goods which he had been talking up for a good many years simply because they had a brand on them and a price stamped. It's a good thing all right for a manufacturer or a jobber to get their line of branded goods onto our shelves and get us to advertise them, but the retailer who does this kind of business will sooner or later come to grief.”

“Buying right is the thing that makes you able to sell right,” the cloak man spoke up.

“Yes, you bet your life, that's the thing that we must look out for,” remarked both of the retail merchants.

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"I know one man," continued the cloak man, "who worked a good smooth game on the wholesale house he had been dealing with. They carried a certain line of goods in heavy flannels that he wished for his trade. He was out in the mountains in Colorado. But somehow or other he had a hunch that the house was gouging him a little on the price, so one day he went into this concern—he was a good-looking fellow—and struck the head of the house for a job to go on the road. He offered to go out on a commission basis, and you know a man who is fool enough to do a thing of this kind does not have much trouble in getting a line. He made a sort of an arrangement with the old man—did it in just a few minutes—but first asked to look through the house and see if the line would suit him, as he was going to put up his own money for traveling expenses.

"When he got down to where the flannels were that he wished, he said to the old

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man: 'Well, now, what's the price on these goods, for example?' '\$24 a dozen,' said the old man—the price that this man he had just hired had always paid for them. 'Still, of course, we do frequently cut them to \$22.50, and at a tight pinch we can still sell them and make a pretty fair profit for \$21. That is absolutely bottom.'

“ ‘And so you've been robbing me right along,’ said the merchant. ‘I rather had an idea that you had.’ ‘Well, how's that?’ asked the old man he had hired out to. ‘Why, my name is Sandusky, from —, and I've been buying these goods and paying you \$24 a dozen for them. I don't wish to sell any goods on the road for you, but what I do wish is to buy them right.’ ”

“It is all right to buy goods at the right price,” said the hat man, “but the merchant who goes floundering around, shopping from one place to another and putting his limited knowledge of business against the specialized

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experience of the traveling salesman who waits on him, doesn't get the best of it. In the first place, if he tries a little of this and a little of that, he mixes his line."

"And it is better," put in Hoover, "to pay a little more for goods than to do this. Broken lines are a bad thing for the retail merchant."

"And another thing," continued the hat man, "his business will be so small that no man on the road, and no wholesale house or factory will care anything about his business. Instead of buying goods cheaper this way, he will not only get his line mixed, but have to pay more for them. The wholesale house appreciates the loyal, faithful customer who concentrates his business."

"Yes, these shoppers are not worth anything to us," began Watkins. "The shopper and the professional kicker are two classes of merchants that I do not care anything for. Any reputable wholesale concern or manufac-

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turer tries its level best to please the customer, but the man out in the country is often unreasonable. If the man in the country who has a complaint will make it in a reasonable, fair kind of a way he will get a great deal more attention paid to his order than if he sets up a howl every few days."

"Well, you don't have much trouble with me, Watkins, do you?" asked his customer, Hoover.

"No—and you get good treatment, don't you?"

"Yes, you bet your life I do. That's why I am up here again. There is another reason for a retail merchant to concentrate his business. It is this: The question of credit. I know, for when I hadn't been in business a very great while, I went through the mill and came very near having the life ground out of me. I tried this plan of getting a little here and a little somewhere else. This was in '93."

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"Ah! Who doesn't remember that!" exclaimed French.

"And," Hoover continued, "I wasn't doing very much business myself. My business fell off from twenty-five to forty per cent. But still I had these bills to pay. These strange houses began to get scared and write me that they would give me additional discounts if I would pay my bills. I would go to the bank but I couldn't borrow money. Next thing, they would draw on me. Then some of them placed their claims in the hands of attorneys. I managed to swim through all right, but when I set my foot on shore again I began to mow them out. I got into a tight scrape again in '96, but at that time I was doing most of my business with six houses—and I tell you, I picked six that I knew to have plenty of capital. When I got into the squeeze the second time, I wrote them and told them so, and they said to me: 'Don't worry, Hoover, we know you're all right. If

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you are a little slow, don't fret about being pushed.' "

" Well, as mine is one of those lucky houses," spoke up Watkins, rising from his chair, " I guess I'll just let Johnnie's father here buy the cigars for the crowd."

And with this, the little party sauntered over to the stand.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CLERK

THE same group of merchants and traveling men who had sat with Watkins and his young college man packer, who was fast getting used to the bit, again gathered in the chairs they had left in the Baltimore Hotel, at Kansas City. Hoover, the merchant, rocked a couple of times in his big chair, then leaned forward and remarked:

“The greatest trouble a retail merchant has in building a business is with his clerks. It is hard to get men to work for you who are bright and snappy and who, for so much per week, will take an interest in your business. So many of them, too, are downright stupid. Now, for example, I had a case like

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this only the day before I came up here. A lady came into my store to buy some matting. I was writing in my office and let one of my young lady clerks wait upon her. Instead of spreading out two or three rolls on the floor of the carpet room, she let the customer herself finger over the matting. The customer and my clerk were very near, where I could see them. The lady asked the clerk: 'Has this piece a pattern?'

" 'Yes, it has a pattern—forty cents a yard.'

" 'Forty cents?' said the lady, as if she were a little surprised at the price. Then the clerk showed her another piece. This was thirty-five.

" 'Thirty-five? Has that a pattern?'

" Well, it was clear to my mind that that lady was looking for two things—she wanted a piece of matting that had a pattern and that was cheap. 'Won't you let me see this piece?' the customer asked. The clerk was

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absolutely too stupid or too lazy to display the rolls. Then she stood there like a dummy and after a while the lady said: 'I will have twelve yards of this forty-cent piece, please. You say forty cents is the price of this? It seems to me I saw some very much like this at Springfield the other day' (you know my store is near Springfield) 'for thirty cents a yard.' That clerk never made any answer whatsoever. She didn't say that perhaps the day the lady saw it the store was making a special sale, or that the price on matting, like that on many other things, was going up, or that the quality of that which she saw was probably not so good. She merely started to cut off the twelve yards and was going to let it go at that.

"At this I left my office and explained to the lady how the price could be different or the quality they were selling in Springfield not so good; and when I had made a reasonable explanation to her, she then said: 'Per-

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haps—yes—all right—mm, mm—twelve—no, twenty-four yards. I wish enough for two rooms.'

"There I stood not only in danger of losing that sale, but of having that customer feel that I was high priced. Of course she would have talked this around with her neighbors and this would have kept more customers from coming to my store."

"Ah, a clever clerk helps a store a great deal," said the furniture man. "Not a great while ago, when I went to shave, one morning, I found I had no soap. As I passed the drug store in the hotel on the way to breakfast—this was in Colorado Springs—I dropped in and asked the clerk for a stick of shaving soap. 'Yes, sir,' said he politely—and he at once laid out three kinds before me. When I had picked up the piece I wished, he said to me: 'It is barely possible I have something here that will just exactly strike you. You carry a shaving outfit, I

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am sure,' and with this he showed me half a dozen rubber-lined toilet cases. 'Oh, I haven't time to fool with anything like that,' I answered. 'I throw my razor and brush and everything right in.' 'Well, you see, this is rubber lined and it will keep your brush, if it is not quite dry when you put it away from soiling your collars or anything in your grip. Then you see, when you have to shave in the morning on a sleeper, you don't have to lug your whole big grip to the wash room, but merely stick this under your arm—then you have all the articles together. Nice place, here, you see, for your razor, soap, shaving soap, comb, brush—everything. This is a fresh lot we have just got in. We are selling them very rapidly. Everybody is pleased with them. Not very expensive, either. This one for \$1.50, the next for \$2, and this elegant one for \$2.50.'

"This boy was just a young fellow, but he was so polite, bright, and to the point, that

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he really convinced me that I should have one of those toilet cases and I bought it; and on top of that he sold me a new shaving brush, a comb, and a few other small articles. And he knew when to stop. A great many clerks, you know, try to rub it in and tire you out. Do you know, I liked this young fellow to wait on me, and instead of going to the cigar stand I would go in and patronize him when I wanted something to smoke."

"I wish I could have a corps of clerks like that one," remarked Hoover. "It is so hard to get them to take an interest in your business. That fellow that you've just told me about won't be a clerk very long. He will either have a good position on the road or else a drug store of his own.

"I have one young lady, though, that's a crackerjack. She sells twice as much as any other clerk that I have, and she gets better wages than any other, too. She deserves it. Lots of people who come in won't let anyone

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else wait on them. One day a gentleman came in—he was as sour as a pickle.

“ ‘ I want to get,’ he growled, ‘ some salt and pepper boxes—some with big holes in them so that I can get the salt and pepper out. I have the best little wife in the world, I believe, but—to save my life, I can’t get her to buy any salt and pepper boxes. For three years I have been swearing every time I sat down to the table. To-day when I wanted to sprinkle some salt over a canteloupe, the stuff was wet and soggy. I couldn’t shake the salt out, and when it came to the pepper I pounded on the bottom of the pepper box so hard that I knocked off the top of it and spilled a whole spoonful of pepper into my nice canteloupe.’

“ ‘ How funny!’ remarked the young lady, laughing. ‘ Now, I know that you aren’t going to have that trouble any more. Here are some real nice saltcellars for the salt and boxes for the pepper, and—I’ll tell you, just

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use some of the saltcellars to put the pepper into. Why not? And you tell your wife that if she will mix a little cornstarch in with the salt, it will just shake out the nicest ever.'

"Well, that was just a simple thing for that clerk to do, but she pleased that man, and now he won't let anybody else in the house wait on him when he wants anything; and when the children of that family are sent to the store to get anything, they always stand around until 'Miss Belle' can wait on them. You see the customer appreciates some little suggestion like this from the clerk."

"Yes, indeed, they do," answered the Baltimore cloak man. "And, in addition to that, they like to be treated honestly. Not far from where I live when I am at home there are two drug stores—on opposite sides of the street. For three or four years I always went to the one nearest me. One day, however, when I happened to be out for a walk, a friend of mine asked me into the other drug

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store to have a cigar. I happened to think that my wife had told me to get a sponge so that she could sponge off the baby with alcohol that night. The baby was a trifle ailing. The clerk showed me three or four sponges. He was rather a gruff kind of a fellow and I didn't exactly like him. He asked me what I wanted to use this sponge for. 'Well,' I said, 'I want to get a real good, soft one. We must use it to sponge the baby off with alcohol.' 'Well, I'll tell you,' said he, 'there are plenty of sponges, and I'll sell you all you want if you really wish them. It's none of my business, but if I were you I wouldn't use a sponge for that. After you use it once or twice it will all draw up and get hard. The best thing for you is to tear a piece out of the sleeve of one of your old shirts and use that.'

"I took that clerk's tip and didn't buy the sponge, but I'll wager that my bill for little sundry things at that store has not run less

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than ten dollars a month for a good long time. When I was at home last, this clerk told me that he had bought out the store; and this man was not a bad fellow at all. Ofttimes you meet people who are really disgusting with their shallow smiles. This man might have been just a little less rough—I don't altogether approve of that—but the common honesty he had more than made up for anything else he lacked."

"Well, you must back up honesty, too, when you deal with a customer, by giving him honest merchandise," said Hoover. "I instruct my clerks always to sell something good if they can, and always to show something good even if the customer wants something cheap. The old saying that the 'quality is remembered long after the price is forgotten' is a true one, and there is no place where it works out better than in the retail business. In the retail trade, you see, the one that sells the goods comes right up against

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the one that uses the goods. If what you sell proves O. K., then the customer is coming back to tell you about it; but if what you sell is poor you may never hear of it, because the customer does not wish to go back the second time to a place where he has once been bit. This idea of a customer's coming back to a place where he has been swindled to get even—well, there's nothing in that! Yes, sir; I instruct my clerks always to sell something good if they can, and if they sell a poor article, to tell the customer so at the time, so that the disappointment may come before they get the article rather than afterwards.

“Now, for example, this same young lady I was telling you about—Miss Belle—always sells to customers the very best stuff we have in the house. Last Christmas we had in our line a lot of toilet articles. A lady came in and wanted a brush—not to give away this time, but to use herself. The clerk showed her several brushes. The first one was worth

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\$4. Now you know \$4 for one hair brush down in a town the size of ours, where there are not many rich people, looks like extravagance. But this young lady said:

“ ‘Now, madam, \$4 looks like a good deal for a hair brush, I am sure—but see what a beautiful brush this is’; and with this she ran her hand over the bristles—‘and you know a lovely head of hair like yours should not be touched by a cheap brush. This brush will go right down to the roots of your hair, and at the same time the bristles are not so hard that they will scratch your scalp. I really believe there is more real good value in this brush for \$4 than there would be in two of this one here at \$3 each.’

“With good easy talk like this she jollied up this lady and sold the four-dollar brush. Why, ever since that time, that woman has been a walking advertisement for me. When her lady friends come to see her and she takes them into her room, she is sure

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to spring that four-dollar brush and talk about Hoover's being the place where they carry fine goods, and so on. And all this comes about because my clerk knew in the beginning how to handle good customers and sell them good things."

"Whatever became of the man you used to have in your dry goods department, Hoover?" asked Watkins, the dry goods road salesman. "He struck me as being a mighty bright fellow."

"Oh, Williams, you mean. Well, I'll tell you, Williams was a good man for a long time, but after a while he began to show up late in the mornings and want to take afternoons off too often after I'd had him a year or two and put him forward a little, you know—he was up with me a couple of times to help buy the goods from you—he began to feel his oats and I finally had to let him go. That's one trouble I've often had. Treat a man right and then have him get

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toppy. This fellow Williams came pretty near ruining all the clerks I had at that time. He got them nearly all so that they wanted to do the same things that he did. I raised my bristles one Saturday night and told all of my men that they would have to get down at half past seven and that each man must sweep his department. I said to them: 'Boys, I'll be here with you myself at that time and I'll sweep out the office—that's my department.'

"Williams rather mumbled something about not wanting to sweep out, which gave me just the chance I was looking for and I let him have his walking papers right there. Since that time I have had better discipline in my store."

"Well, it's easy enough for you to have discipline in your store, Hoover," Watkins remarked, "and it is easy enough for you to have your clerks take an interest in your business, but it is a different problem when

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it comes to running a large retail establishment. I know of two heads of large retail houses that get more out of their clerks, I believe, than any two concerns on earth. And they go at it in entirely different ways. There is a large retail dry goods house which has at its head one of the best men breathing. In the first place this firm carries reputable merchandise. The old gentleman who is at the head of the sales department does not stay shut up in a little office, but spends most of the time on the floor. He is a dignified old gentleman, but he's not one of those proud old fellows who's always sticking his thumbs under his arms, frowning, and saying: 'Look at me; I'm the boss.' But he goes from aisle to aisle, has formed the personal acquaintance of every one of the hundreds of clerks he has. He is always saying a kind word to them and giving them encouragement. If a young woman in his employ makes a large sale he goes up and tells her that she has done well.

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If some young man in the store fails to make a sale to a customer, he does not go up and rake this clerk over the coals, but, instead, encourages him, and says: 'Well, now, you'll do better next time.'

"This man has organized in his store what you might call a salesman's college, of which he, himself, is the president. The professors in this college are the heads of departments. The students are the clerks. The old gentleman turns the dining room of this department store into a lecture hall. Everyone in his employ spends one hour each week, or longer if the discussion becomes interesting, in study. The head of a certain department will call together all of those under him, and he, himself, will either make a talk to them, have some one else to do so, or else call upon one or more of the clerks to discuss a point. On the evening of this school session the firm gives to each employé fifty cents in supper money. They go out after the store closes

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and return promptly at seven, and at eight, if they wish, they are free.

“The old gentleman himself does not attend all of these sessions, but, like those under him, he gives one hour each week to this work. One week he will give an hour to the dress goods department, another to notions, etc. The clerks of this establishment have become in this way so well drilled that anyone who has worked for this firm for a year or more can easily find a position in any other store in the city; but one who is employed by this firm seldom leaves it except to take some position higher than that of clerk.

“This man gets good work out of his clerks by taking a personal interest in them. He is very kind-hearted, too. Many a time, so one of his men once told me, if a rain storm came up suddenly as one of his salesladies was starting out without an umbrella, the old gentleman would take one out of stock and make her a present of it.

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“The head of the other store of which I speak goes at getting good work out of the clerks in this way. He figures that if you drop one penny into a man’s purse, he will try himself to get another in. He pays to his clerks small salaries and then pays to each one a commission upon sales. This idea came to that man several years ago. He first tried it in the silk department. That store to-day does the best silk business in its city, which is a metropolitan one. It does not stand exactly as the leading store there, but it has the leading business in silks. One young woman, on the day before Christmas, last year, made commissions amounting, that day alone, to over \$18.

“When a customer walks into that department, the clerks do not exactly grab after her—they are too busy for this—but they take hold of customers and take interest in them. They show goods. They are not paid just a mere pittance of a few dollars a

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week, but they are given something worth while if they make a sale. Clerks are more apt to get tired working if they feel they will get paid whether they work or not, than if they know they will not get their pay unless they make sales. Then you will see them hustle.

"After this man had tried this system in his silk department and found that it worked so well he adopted it throughout the concern in all departments. And, mark me, you are going to see that store come forward more rapidly than any other store in the city, because the clerks in that store are paid well for what they do and are interested in what they are doing.

"Now, that plan, it strikes me," continued Watkins (Hoover had become so interested that his cigar had gone out, and young John C. had sat with his eyes wide open, too absorbed to take notes with a pencil), "is the ideal plan on which a store—a large store

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especially—should work. I know even of a smaller establishment in which not more than ten clerks are employed where this commission system is handled successfully.”

“I tried a sort of commission system,” spoke up Hoover, “but didn’t like it very well. It was giving my clerks sort of pin money—or ‘spiffs’ as they call it, to work off certain lines. When a line would get short or sizes broken on it, I would put a little spiff of from ten to fifty cents on it if a clerk would sell that thing—and I also tried putting spiffs on things that paid me a legitimate but a longer profit. But I found that the spiff system did not work well for this reason: it made my clerks essentially dishonest with their customers.

“I want to tell you, gentlemen, that the one way for a clerk to deal with a customer is the fair, square, straight way. Whenever a clerk is working for a little ten cents or a little two bits or a little half dollar for his

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own pocket, and is considering himself instead of the customer, he is doing an injury to the business. I know that this spiff system prevails all over the country, but I don't believe in it, as I said, because it makes a clerk dishonest. A corps of clerks who do not treat a man's customers right will soon tear down his business; a corps that treat customers fairly will build a business.

"No, sir; no more of this spiff system for me! Of course, I can see where the commission system is better—that is, if you give the same percentage of commissions on all sales. That would enable the clerk still to be honest with the customer and at the same time sell him higher priced goods, which is never a disadvantage to the person who buys them."

The Philadelphia clothing man lifted his right hand and gesticulated with index finger; the discussion was really becoming warm and interesting. "I quite agree with you, Mr. Hoover, on the last point that you make," he

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said. "One of my customers has this system: He gives each clerk who will sell a suit of clothes for \$20 or more a spiff of fifty cents. And this is the result. When the man comes in and wants to buy a suit of clothes the clerk will ask him how good a suit he wants. If the man says about \$15 the clerk will immediately show him something worth \$20 or \$25, and eight times out of ten the clerk will sell a \$20 suit if the man has that amount of money in his pocket. And I know from actual experience in selling that this man's business on suits retailing at \$20 and up has more than trebled within two years. He does the same thing in his hat department now, and in his shoe department. If one of the clerks sells a hat for \$3 or more, or a pair of shoes for \$3.50 or up, he gets ten cents."

"Well, now, that strikes me as being a very good idea," remarked Hoover thoughtfully. "This had never come to me and I

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am going to adopt that system in my business. I believe, too, if I had a very large trade like the man you spoke of, Watkins, I should not only pay a commission upon sales but I would give an additional commission for the sale of goods above a certain standard. To be sure, I should adopt the system of the other man you spoke of who calls his clerks together and has a sort of a school. It seems to me that a combination of these three ideas, backed up with plenty of capital, and with giving the clerks reputable merchandise to sell, would build bigger any retail business in America."

"Yes, I think," said the hat man, "it would remove, too, very great temptations from clerks—I mean knocking down and boozing. I can't see, though, for the life of me, why a young man working in a store and expecting to get forward will do either one of these things. Stealing, though, seems to be born in some people. I know that I, my-

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self, once had an interest in a little business. It was just a small store, needing only two men to run it—my partner and a clerk. I paid the clerk his salary and put his time against that of my partner. Do you know that one day my partner caught that clerk knocking down twenty-five cents on a \$1.25 sale. He couldn't believe that this honest appearing young fellow would do anything like that. But he caught him right in the act. I happened along about that time and my partner told me the circumstances. I talked with the clerk and said: 'Now, see here, Harold, you're a mighty good man and well liked in this community; but to put it in plain language, you have stolen. We should discharge you in a minute—in fact, I will discharge you right now, but I'll tell you what I am going to do, Harold. I am going to hire you back on the same old wages that you used to have. That's enough for you to live on—it's more than any other young man

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has in this town. I want you to be a man. I want you to be honest. It's the best thing for you.'

"My partner and myself both thought our clerk would be honest, but we caught him stealing again within a month and had to discharge him. I really believe, though, that if he could have been given some incentive to make a little more without stealing, he would perhaps have been honest.

"And this boozing—that's another thing! I believe really that this comes about because a great many clerks become despondent. They get their little twelve or eighteen a week and they see the same amount coming in year after year and no advance. They have no stimulus during the week with each sale they make, and that keeps them from taking an interest in the business. *To make a clerk interested in your business make him interested in every sale.* Instead of growing despondent, stealing, knocking down, and

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boozing, a clerk should feel that he has a future just the same as any other man. There are lots of men in business who intend, after a while, to retire from business—perhaps not altogether, but by degrees—who would like to have some one to put in a little money with them, and give the business their attention. Who is the man they will first look for to take an interest? Not some stranger—but the man they know—the man who has been in their eye all the time—the man they can trust. The clerk should not grow despondent and steal and booze—but, instead of that, he should take a vital interest in the business—knowing that such attention and hard work and honesty are sure to bring him material reward as well as a good conscience.

“I believe the greatest fault with clerks is that they haven’t enough nerve. To be sure, to be a clerk on a salary, it matters not how much that salary may be, should not be the final goal of any young man. It should be

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to become a proprietor himself. Now, for example, I know of one young man who worked for twenty years for one establishment. He was a splendid salesman, strictly honorable and all that, but one day he had a knock-down, drag-out scrap with the buyer in his department. The buyer was thought well of by the head of the house and this clerk knew it. In fact, he felt so ashamed of himself for getting into the brawl that he tendered his resignation. He was asked to keep on, but he said, 'No, I can't stay around here any more.' He was a married man, too, and had a couple of children. He had saved a couple of thousand dollars or so. He thought he would work for some other firm. All at once he said to himself: 'I am not making any progress even if I do find another place. I have \$2,000 here and I'm going to sink that \$2,000 before I go to work for anybody else, and I am going to have a business of my own.' He talked the thing over

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with his wife and she had nerve enough to tell him to go ahead.

“ This was in the city of St. Louis. That man went down town and rented a room for \$12 a month. He went to New York and bought a little line of goods—special patterns in dry goods. He sent out cards inviting those whom he had known and others to come in and see his dress goods. Think of it! Asking the *bon ton* of St. Louis to come and see dress goods in a room that cost \$12 a month! But he did it. These ladies began to ask him where they could get these dresses made up. Then he got a few dressmakers to take an adjoining room. Business began to boom. It then struck him that the thing to do was to pay these dressmakers a salary and profit by their work. His next step was to buy a few first class ready-made garments. He started his little shebang on the fourth floor of a little building on Broadway. In two years he had done so well that

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he moved to the second story of a building on Olive Street. World's Fair year this man rented a six-story building on Broadway. To-day—and it has been only six years since he began—he is doing a business big enough to justify him paying a rent of \$12,000 a year."

CHAPTER IX

THE BUYER

AS Watkins, the general dry goods salesman, and his college boy packer, John C., the son of the old man, paced the floor of the waiting room in the depot at Denver, waiting for their delayed train, one of his friends, with a sour look upon his face, came out of the baggage room, rattling his checks.

"Hello, Sam, how are you?" asked Watkins. "You're looking a little glum."

"I have had the confoundest time to-night, wrestling with a buyer."

"Buyer, eh?" exclaimed the veteran. "Deliver me from him. There's a screw loose too often when you must deal with a buyer."

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"Yes, you bet your life," answered Sam, the New York clothing man. "This one I had this afternoon monkeyed around with me so long that I almost missed my train."

"What train are you taking?" asked Watkins.

"D. & R. G. to Pueblo."

"Good! We can go along together."

"Rio Grande! Colorado Springs, Pueblo, and all points west on the main line," bawled out the caller.

"Got all the grips, Johnnie?" asked Watkins.

Soon after the train rumbled out Watkins, John C., the clothing man, and several of their friends filled the smoking compartment of their sleeper. Watkins began to joke his friend Sam about the buyer.

"All right," said Sam. "Rub it in! Rub it in! But just the same this dealing with the buyer is the bane of the life of us boys on the road."

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“You bet he’s a problem,” put in a big fat shoe man, who sat in one of the willow chairs. “The main trouble in selling to a buyer is the uncertainty of it. He may either be a grafter, want you to bum with him, stand you off until he ‘goes East,’ have the swelled head, or maybe the other fellow is the one who stands in. To be sure, there are lots of honest, conscientious buyers in the country, but as a rule I very much prefer to establish my trade where I can deal with the man whose money pays for the goods he buys.”

“Yes, you bet your life, that’s the system I play,” answered the clothing man, “but still we must wrestle with them once in a while just the same. The worst fellow to deal with is the one who puts out the mit and wants a little graft. Now, for example, I was out in one of my big Western towns last year about the end of my trip. The house advised me that I might close out several

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carry-over lots. I braced the proprietor of one of the clothing stores. My song sounded good to him and he called over his buyer and told him to go over with me and see what I had. I tried to get the proprietor himself to go along, but he said: 'No, I let my buyer here attend to all that. He'll know whether or not you have anything we can use and it's up to him.' Mr. Buyer went down to the hotel with me. I showed him the stuff I had to close and I know the prices on it were all right. He didn't look at the stuff very carefully, and do you know I could feel in my bones he was out grafting. Now, here was just the fix I was in. I wouldn't offer to give him a hand-out. I don't believe in that sort of business. And I couldn't go up to the proprietor and tell him what I thought. The result was that I didn't do any business when I had every right in the world to do it. I know the stuff was right in price because afterwards I went to a larger store and got

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the proprietor himself to come down with me, and he picked up the lots like he would lost money on the sidewalk."

"Yes, and these grafters have a smooth way sometimes of getting the hand-out," remarked the fat shoe man, squaring himself in his chair. "I used to strike a fellow over in the Dakotas that for a couple of years I could never do anything with. Finally one day he came over to my sample room. He looked over my line for a little while and then began to visit. Of course you know when we have a man in our sample rooms we don't want to force things along at all. It is then that we like to take things easy, and if we can get to visiting with a man and get acquainted with him, so much the better.

"After we had talked for half an hour or so—it was then three o'clock in the afternoon—starting to the door, he said to me: 'I think we can use some shoes all right. I'll go over and run through stock and then I

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can give you the order in the morning. By the way, I'm sure you'll like a little sport and we can stir up two or three of the boys and have a little sociable game of poker to-night after we close up. ' "

" Well, how much did it cost you? " asked Watkins.

" Oh, I came out even. I didn't play. I looked at my watch and said, ' I'd like, if possible, to get West to-night on the midnight train, and don't you think you can get the stock looked up and see me this afternoon? ' You know I long since learned that it's a good idea to cut out these long-winded fellows anyhow. ' I shall drop over and see you later. ' I went on about my business and sold another man; and, very much as I expected, the buyer, when I called at his store, said that he found they had enough. "

" Another trouble with the buyer, too, is that they want to ' go East, ' " said the clothing man. " That's all the satisfaction I got

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out of my buyer friend up in Denver. He looked through and said he liked my stuff pretty well and that he would give me an order when he got into market. Well, you know how that is. It's a hard game for a man to play when a buyer goes down East and the night hawks dig their claws into him."

"I don't exactly understand you," said young John C., who after several weeks of road life had not become thoroughly familiar, although he had gained poise. "Night hawks—what do you mean by that?"

"Oh, I tell you—it's just like this. A great many Eastern firms have men whose chief business it is to show the town to the buyers who come into market. A whole lot of them are mighty fond of a good time when they go East. I don't exactly blame them for wanting this, and—true enough—it is all right for a man to go into market, but the system is a hard one for us to play just the

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same. Many of us traveling men, too, are more or less night hawks; yet there is nothing in it."

"Yes, it's hard enough," remarked another clothing man from Philadelphia, "when we catch them at home. I had an experience this trip, since you are talking about buyers. I ran up against one that had the swelled head. This was down in Kansas. I had been doing business in a certain store there for a long time. My old friend was getting pretty well on in years and he had the idea that it would be a good thing for him to get younger blood in the house—so he hired this young fellow to take charge of the clothing department.

"This same chap had been clerking in another town. He had knocked on my goods once and I called him down. When I went into my old friend and customer's store this time I spoke to all the boys, including the buyer. He very soon told me he had be-

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come the buyer, and he was very proud of it. The old gentleman hadn't come down, so I said to the new buyer, 'Well, I'll go over and get opened up and be around to see you a little later on.' 'Well, there's no use coming to see us,' said he. 'We don't want any of your stuff in this store as long as I am here.' And up and down he walked as pompous as a peacock. 'All right,' said I, 'we'll see by and by.' 'Well, there won't be anything to see about. I am the buyer in that department, and you can bet your life I'll never buy any of your goods.'

"When I came back from the sample room my old customer was sitting in the office. I walked back to where he was and when I got around to business he said, 'Well, my young man here that I've put in charge will go over with you.' Then I told him of the way I had been greeted when I came in earlier that morning. 'Well, we'll see about this, Mark,' and with this he went up

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to the young man and said: 'Look here, you go over with this gentleman and buy some clothing. I've been handling it here for twenty years now. I have a nice home up on the hill and money in the bank. I've made money on it. I have thought very well of you but, let me tell you, here's a man I have been dealing with for nearly a quarter of a century. We are going to keep on having his clothing in the house. Now, come on, and we'll go over together.'

"When we got into the sample room, the young buyer said, 'Let me see your five-dollar line.' My boy spread them out. Then he said, 'Let me see your six-dollar line.' He commenced to look at the buttonholes and turn up the collars, and he said, 'Well, these are not hand-felled collars and handmade buttonholes—the patterns and cut of your clothing I don't like,' and he said it in a sneering kind of way that made me mad as fire. Said I: 'Look here, young man, I've

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been in the clothing business for just forty years. You can't come into my sample room and before a customer of mine condemn my merchandise. I'll be hanged higher than Haaman ever hung before I'll let a young chap like you do that. I know what's the matter with you and I'm going to tell your boss right here the whole story. You have the swelled head. Just about one more crack like that and I'll see that you get fired. The idea of a young snip like you trying to tell old clothing merchants like us something about our business.'

" 'Now, Dave,' said I to my friend, 'send this boy on up to the store where he belongs. Maybe he can pile coats all right, but you see very plainly that he doesn't know how to buy clothing. Why, here he comes and asks me for handmade buttonholes on six-dollar suits. He might just as well expect a set of four-karat diamond earrings for a dollar and a half. If he wants well-made clothing he must

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pay for it. I don't want him comparing my six-dollar stuff with some other man's twelve-dollar line. The trouble is some other man has been along here and opened up a couple bottles of wine and swelled his head. And, besides, he hasn't forgotten the time when I gave him a calling down that he very badly needed, when he was clerking over here in this other town.'

" 'Look here, young man,' said I to the buyer, 'I guess we haven't any more business with you, and I'll not let anyone stay in my sample room and knock on my line of goods.'

" 'Then,' said I to my merchant friend, 'Dave, you and I have been doing business together for twenty years, and don't you think we can get along without this young fellow?' 'Yes, I guess we can, Mark,' said he, and he sent the buyer back to the store.

"When I got around six months after-

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wards, my old friend said to me, ' Well, do you know, Mark—that fellow lasted just one month after you left. I couldn't stand him. He thought he knew more about my business than I did.' "

"That is the chief difficulty with the buyer system," began the New York clothing man. " You don't know how long they are going to last at a place. If they are incapable men they soon get the bounce; if they are capable they oftentimes grow dissatisfied with what they are paid and are looking out for another position."

" You are right about that, Sam," spoke up his brother clothing salesman, " but lots of goods are bought every season by buyers, and what can we do? How to treat the buyer is a problem for the salesman."

" Well, one thing I won't do," laughed the shoe man, " is play poker to get business. You have heard the stand I took on that—and I don't believe in boozing with a buyer

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either. Even though the man who owns the store does not purchase the goods, but leaves this to his buyer, he keeps an eye on him. If he sees the buyer growing too chummy with some particular salesman, he opens his eyes. To be sure, there are a whole lot of mighty good, square, straight, sociable fellows buying goods for merchants, yet I have seen many of them who start out being sociable end up by losing their positions because they were too much so. Another thing, it never pays a salesman to prostitute himself for anybody."

"You are right there," remarked the furnishing goods man. "It's a great deal better to gain the good will of the buyer in some other way than by loading yourself with him. One of the best customers I have to-day used to be a buyer in a store several years ago. When I first knew him he was clerking for \$10 a week. He had come over from the old country and didn't know our language very well. One day in talking to him I told

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him that a business man, as well as a professional man, should have an education. I bought a couple of books that were helpful in learning how to write correctly and sent them to this boy, Eddie. I told him that if he would write letters to me or little compositions of some kind, I would correct them and send them back to him.

“That boy learned rapidly. Within a year or so he began to write the advertisements of the firm, and then one day when I was around, the proprietor being away—he came over and bought my line of goods. When he became buyer I did not change in my conduct toward him. He kept on studying and I continued to help him. Now, I didn’t do all this as a matter of business. I took an interest in the boy as I would have in any other young man who came in my way; but just the same I had that boy’s respect, which was worth a great deal more than friendship gained by boozing.”

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"Yes, that will never win out for keeps," remarked Watkins. "It is a great deal better to impress a buyer with the responsibility of his position and to help him to be honest, than it is to try to debase him."

"Yes, I learned a lesson two years ago," spoke up the New York clothing man. "I had an account that I had sold for two or three years and I felt that I had good control of it. Not as a matter of graft, exactly, but purely out of appreciation, I sent the buyer a suit for his boy complimentary. That was the last bill I ever sold the concern. The proprietor told me very frankly that he didn't like his buyer to be the recipient of any favors. This little affair, you see, not only worked an injury to myself, but to the buyer as well."

The engine whistled. The porter called, "Palmer Lake—five minutes for luncheon." When the train pulled out again, Watkins, who was the first to get enough from the big

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bag of luncheon, lighted a cigar and picked up the conversation.

“ I’ll tell you,” said he, “ the buyer may be a problem for us salesmen all right, but he is an even greater problem for the merchant who employs him. If the proprietor calls him down too often the buyer will become afraid and be downright stingy in his buying. This is, of course, a disadvantage to the merchant. A man must have goods in order to sell them. If, on the other hand, he turns the buyer loose, the buyer may be one of those reckless ones that would either accept graft or else be a dreamer, and first thing the proprietor knows he has several thousand dollars of bills to pay and too long a stock for a certain department. Why, do you know, there is one great big concern in this country that lost in two years an immense amount in one little department. The buyer took a crazy notion to get all the stuff that could be made. It had to be closed out

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at a great sacrifice, and the loss to this firm on this one man, in two years, was nearly a quarter of a million dollars."

"Speaking of graft," remarked the shoe man, "did you hear of that buyer down East who, the other day, was accidentally killed? Why, when they looked through his clothes they found that he had in his pocket a check for a thousand dollars from one firm whose line he had bought."

"Yes, indeed," responded the New York clothing man, "the buyer is, after all, a tougher proposition for the man whose money he invests than he is for the salesman. But what are they to do about it?"

"Just this," replied Watkins, straightening up and slapping his hands together as he spoke: "The proprietor, if he wishes to get successful buyers, must make them partners in the business, either by making them stockholders or else giving them for their salary a certain percentage of the profits. In this

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way the buyer will feel that he is investing his own money and he will then take a greater interest in the business. Now, I know of one retail firm which was composed of three brothers. For many years two of the brothers bought the goods—one of them died and the other was stricken with paralysis. The third brother, who had been the office man of the firm, tried to hire men to take their places. That firm came very near going broke. One department would be neglected and the other would be overbought. He shifted around and found men to run the departments to whom he sold a reasonable amount of the company's stock. He carried the stock for them at six per cent and agreed to give them any additional dividends they might make. That business changed at once and began to thrive as it had never done before. This man made his buyers partners in his business."

"The same thing holds good in the largest

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manufacturing concern in the country in my line," added the shoe man. "The head of this establishment to which I refer has made the men who buy the materials for his factory stockholders in the concern. He had tried paying salaries to buyers and had found it unprofitable. The chief advantage of this system is that the buyer feels a personal interest in the business and does not change round."

"But, should he ever wish to change," began Watkins, "the best thing for him to have behind him is a good record. The buyer comes directly in contact with the salesman. If the buyer has lushed or accepted graft from a salesman in any way, he will not have that salesman's respect. That salesman is in the best position of any one to help the buyer get a new place, and the buyer should be very careful how he treats the salesman. He should always maintain his integrity at any cost.

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“Now, for example, I know a man who isn’t exactly buyer in a wholesale house, but an assistant buyer. The head buyer left that firm and became a partner in a new house. The man who stood next in line did not get the position which, in the regular run of things, he would have got, simply because the proprietor in that house caught wind of the fact that every six months this assistant buyer had accepted a hundred dollars bribe money from a certain factory from whom they bought goods.”

“Oh, yes, when he comes to dealing with us, the straight way is the only way for the buyer,” spoke up the shoe man. “One of my customers, a few years ago, wanted a man to help him in the business and to buy goods. About that time a young fellow working for a firm that had failed, a long ways off, was out of a job. Now, I knew that he was straight and square. He had been buying goods from me, and on my recommendation

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alone I found another place for him—and did it by wire. That man has made good in his position and is now a partner in the business.”

“I had a case very much like that myself recently,” spoke up the furnishing goods man. “One of my competitors recently gave up his road position and went into the retail business. Of course this firm wanted another man for the territory. A man who had been a buyer in one of the stores I had dealt with, wrote to me and said he would like to get the place. Of course I felt that if I got the place for him I would make a competitor out of a customer, but, at the same time, because I knew him to be straight and capable, I went to the wholesale firm and gave him a recommendation. He had been so square with me that I placed his interest above my own.”

“Ah, that is the way a buyer should be with a salesman, because you never know what is going to happen,” began the New

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York clothing man. "Four or five years ago I had a few thousand dollars that I didn't know how to invest. I knew of a town in which there was a good opening for a clothing store. You know how it is, in traveling over the country we men on the road see good business opportunities. Well, I didn't have a customer there, and I knew of a young fellow that I had been selling goods to. He was buyer for one of my customers, and because I knew him to be absolutely honest and conscientious, I backed him, started a clothing store, and gave him a half interest in the business. He has made good for me, but he would not have had the chance had I not known that he was straight."

"Yes," began Watkins, "the buyer oft-times need not look farther than the house he is working in for a chance. You see, I've been knocking around the country for a good many years. There is one concern which now operates several stores out West that

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started from one small establishment. Just as fast as they developed a good man, they would start a branch store somewhere, making him the head of it and giving him an interest in that business. They at present have one man who comes East for them twice a year. He is a capable, honest fellow, and it is only a matter of a very little while before he becomes a partner in the business.

“ But, even if a man may never hope for a partnership in a business, he is just as sure to have his salary advanced if he makes money for his concern, as he stays in the place. *Men who have money are hunting for men who have brains.*

“ You see, gentlemen, I am on the road for a wholesale dry goods firm. About the time I came with that house, and that was a good long while ago, a young boy also got a job there. He was a green lad, to be sure, and you could play golf on his brogue. He started in the linen department of our firm.

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In a few years he had become assistant buyer. To-day he has charge of the department and invests for the firm hundreds of thousands of dollars every year. They trust him absolutely, and when they found he was made of the right stuff, his salary was made larger and his position assured.

“And we must not think for a moment that a man who has a business so large that he cannot attend to it all himself is hunting for a weakling for a buyer—for some fellow whom he can command and control. What he is looking for is men of independence and ideas and who can put them into execution. When a man becomes buyer, if he wishes to make a big success of it, he must not truckle to anybody above him, but must have the nerve to run his department as he sees it should be run. I know of a young fellow who was assistant buyer in the silk department for one of the very large Eastern dry goods houses. The buyer became sick.

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The department had lagged along and paid a satisfactory profit. This young fellow saw his chance. He was offered over a hundred thousand dollars' worth of silks in one lot at a greatly reduced price. He was the buyer and in full charge at that time. He did not ask anybody a question but bought that stuff. It was such a large transaction that the head of the house came to him and was very much alarmed. That fellow had nerve enough to say to the old gentleman: 'You put me in this department to run it. I took this to mean that if I had any brains I was to use them. Now, I have bought this stuff—watch me sell it!'

"That fellow then went to the advertising man and said: 'Look here, I have bought a hundred thousand dollars' worth of silks at almost fifty cents on the dollar. I want you to spend five thousand dollars in advertising it.' That young man, who had the nerve to invest a hundred thousand dollars for his firm and

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back it up with good selling methods, was exactly the man that the proprietor was looking for. He lifted him from the position of assistant buyer in one department to chief buyer in all departments. He created a new position for him because the man had created a new position for himself."

"Pueblo! Pueblo!" called the brakeman, as the train whistled.

"Got your grip, Johnnie?" asked Watkins.

"Yes, sir," the veteran salesman concluded, "the position of buyer is a responsible one, and the man in this position who uses brains and is honest is sure to go forward."

CHAPTER X

ADVERTISING

“**Y**ES, sir, Watkins, this advertising game is a hard one to play,” remarked Anderson, the big department-store merchant, in the midst of a conversation with his old-time traveling man friend.

They were in Watkins's sample room in one of the Western cities.

Anderson, whose business not many years before had been small, still kept in touch with the buying for his dress-goods department. “Yes, sir, it's a hard game, a hard game. I don't know whether the man who advertises gets business, or whether the man who gets business advertises, but somehow the two things go together.”

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"Yes, but it's a terrific expense to you," said young John C., Watkins's assistant, who, on account of his extravagance with his expense account, had had economy drummed into him.

"Yes," replied Anderson, "but it's just as necessary to advertise goods in order to market them as it is to make goods. There is scarcely a great business in America that has not been made great by advertising, and certainly there is no business which does business on the merit of the stuff they make which could not be made greater, if the good stuff they make smelled more of printer's ink.

"You know there are some merchants who do not believe in buying advertised goods. I do, because I have found out that manufacturers who advertise the goods they make, make better goods than the manufacturer who does not advertise what he makes. Advertising sells goods. The advertiser does a bigger volume of business, and although his

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advertising costs money, *it increases the volume of his business* so much that he can make goods better for the same prices. He can buy materials in greater quantities, and get together, and keep together, a better force of workmen. It is a mistake for a merchant to think that advertised brands of goods, say shoes, or clothing, or anything, is not at least as good or better than the brands which are not advertised. When a manufacturer advertises, then he *must* make good goods; advertising poor stuff loses rather than gains business; because while ink persuades a man to try a breakfast food, ink can't make him ask for it *every* morning. That's up to the goods.

"I know of one firm, for example, that used to do business in the old-fashioned way—make their goods and send out their salesmen to sell them and be at the mercy of any salesman when he chose to leave them.

"They began to spend thousands and

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thousands in advertising, until to-day they can send out stock boys to do their business, and to-day both the salary and expenses of traveling salesmen and advertising expenses, too, do not cost them as much as salesmen alone formerly did. Besides, the manufacturer who advertises his goods for his retail customer fastens those goods upon the customer and both profit.

“ I know a man who did a big business for this firm. He had been with them for a number of years. They cut down his commission one half. Although his salary was much greater than it had ever been before, he got proud and quit, thinking he could carry his trade with him. But my! how he dropped. He could not buck against the advertised line which he had sold. His old friends had to turn him down.

“ Speaking of advertising, I must get some special stuff to advertise. Have you got something you can sell me? I want to phone

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for my advertising man, too, and have him come over."

"Yes, sir," said Watkins, "I can sell you some junk stuff; but look here, Andy, why in the name of common sense don't you quit this miserable fake advertising that you do in your business, and do the square, legitimate kind of advertising? It looks to me like the people are getting tired of all this lying and continuous lying that merchants are doing to-day. It is one eternal round of 'Special Sales,' 'Great Inducements,' 'Enormous Slaughters,' 'Turn - the - World - Up - Side - Down-and-Shake-It' kind of stuff that is now the craze.

"Have you ever stopped to think just what the elements of advertising are? You have been behind the counter so long that you are not a capable judge of what a good advertisement is. Your mind is poisoned. I would rather have, a hundred times over, the opinion of the man or woman who picks up a

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newspaper, and must be attracted by an advertisement—the reader of the advertisement, if you please—than of the man who writes it.

“Why don’t you cut out all of this thirty-nine and forty-nine and ninety-nine cent business, and mark things forty and fifty cents and one dollar?”

“All the women like it,” said Anderson, “and they think a thing is cheaper if we mark it forty-nine cents. Why, do you know they would rather pay sixty-nine cents for a thing than a half a dollar.”

“There is just exactly where you are wrong,” retorted Watkins. He knew his old friend, Anderson, well enough to speak to him plainly. “The first man who marked things ninety-nine and forty-nine cents got the advantage of it because it was novel. He succeeded because it attracted attention, and then every damned idiot did likewise, until now the novelty is worn off, and the only reason why you and all the rest of you

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who are doing that kind of advertising do business is because people must get things to wear somewhere. If you would have the common honesty to come right square out and say, 'We don't use coppers,' and talk against this faking that you are doing, and that nearly every merchant is doing, you would win out by it. Why? Because people are sick and tired of this detestable faking that you do, and that they know you do, and would welcome the wholesome truth. Why! do you know when you mark a thing ninety-nine cents that people think that you are trying to fool them. They know that the value of it cannot be more than one dollar, and they don't care anything about that trifling little penny. Why! do you know that people really have a contempt for such. Stop and think. The greatest shoe manufacturer in America (he also has many retail stores) does not advertise his shoes at \$2.49 and \$3.49, but at \$2.50 and \$3.50, and people

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buy his goods because they have confidence in the methods of this man. This same thing would apply to any retail business.

“And then these marked-down sales! This way of saying, ‘Was \$1.75, now \$1.09.’ Why, do you know that when you put an ad in the paper like that, the people think that you must have got a whale of a profit in the beginning. Perhaps this article cost you about seventy-five cents in the beginning, and the legitimate price on it was from one dollar to a dollar and a quarter. Why don’t you, right in the beginning of the season, charge a legitimate profit and no more on your goods, and come out in great big type, instead of quoting day after day great big pages of *price lies*, and say, in big letters, ‘*We don’t mark stuff down, we don’t mark it up, we mark it right.*’ Come and compare the article that we’ll sell for fifty cents with what the other fellow sells for sixty-nine cents marked down from one dollar’?

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“Do you know I have a friend a little further west from here who told me the other day that when he received new goods he was afraid to mark a price on them, because if he marked it, say, seventy-five cents, the people would not pay that price, because they had grown accustomed to finding everything marked down in his store, and the result was that he had to hold the stuff until he wanted to make a ‘drive’ on it, and then put the price higher than it really was, and mark it down in order to get the people to buy it at all.

“Why, do you know, by your Big Reduction Sales you are educating people to wait until after Christmas to buy their winter goods. This does you an injury, because you get your money out of your goods in January rather than in October.

“The way that you ‘Modern Merchants’ overcome this is by faking *in* season. Just look at this ad of yours in this morning’s

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paper," continued Watkins, picking up *The News*, and reading:

"END OF THE MONTH" Sale. Another of those magnificent bargain events. Just at the opening of the colder weather, when the change is made from ordinary to heavier garments and from early fall to winter styles and colors, comes this welcome news of the regular "month end" clearance sales of most desirable and seasonable things, bringing to you big savings on the very merchandise you would have to buy, even though you paid regular prices for it.

You can depend on one thing in this or any other of our ads—we have the goods we tell you about, and we sell them just as they are advertised.

"Rats!

"Why, you ought to be ashamed to make such a flimsy excuse as 'end of the month' to make a sale. That ad on the face of it is a fake. And who believes you when you say:

"'End of month sale of ladies' tailor-made suits worth \$35 and \$37.50—to-day, only, for \$23.95'?"

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“ Yes, Watkins, but you are wrongfully accusing me. I don’t do any of this faking stuff. When I mark a price down, I really mark it down. I have some ladies’ neckwear on sale now that was really seventy-five-cent neckwear, and I have marked it down to forty-nine cents, and I never mark things up for the purpose of marking them down. My reductions are legitimate reductions.”

“ Well, that may be all very well and good, but because you do do this marking down business, because you do say, ‘ Was ninety-eight cents, now forty-nine,’ even if you told the truth, the people will think you are lying, because so many of your neighbors do this faking. You suffer for their sins.”

“ I can see that you have made a good point there,” said Anderson, slowly. “ I know that some of my competitors do mark things up for the purpose of marking them down. I sent one of my shoppers——”

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"Shopper, what do you mean by that?" said young John C.

"Oh! you see," replied Anderson, "all the big stores in this town and every town employ several people whose business it is to go into other stores, kind of like spies, and see if these statements they make on paper are true. I keep three ladies employed for this purpose, and buy thousands of dollars' worth of goods every year, just to keep line on my competitors.

"Well, one of my shoppers went into another store and bought a certain brand of neckties which was advertised, 'Was \$1.00, now 63 cents.' A careless clerk had rubbed out the original price, which was seventy-five cents, and marked it one dollar, but had not rubbed the seventy-five cents clear out. Anyone could see the original mark, seventy-five cents, and that it had been lifted to one dollar, and then dropped to sixty-three cents. All the time I had had

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that same necktie marked regularly only sixty cents."

"There! that is just the point," broke in Watkins. "Do the square thing all the time and people will find it out. They are itching for honest methods in merchandising.

"Now, for example, I read in one of the New York papers the other day an ad which read like this: 'Choice of any of our \$15 and \$18 suits, with a \$3.00 pair of pants and a \$2.00 fancy vest, all for \$7.95.' What do you think of that? I actually read that ad, and everything else in that ad was as absurd as this. You know it didn't occur to me at the time, but maybe this man was poking fun at everybody else, and telling a lie so big that it made the people believe that not only he, but all the rest of them in that city, were making misrepresentations. Now, if you were to read an ad like this, ask yourself, Anderson, and another one I read in that same paper, which said, 'We will sell you a

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ten-dollar suit of clothes for ten dollars,' which would you believe?

"But all of the liars are not in the big cities," continued Watkins. "See here," said he, taking from his pocket a paper published in a little town of 10,000. "Let's see what liar No. 1 has to say:

OPEN YOUR EYES To These Irresistible Bargains.
FURNITURE DEPT. A rocker, exactly like cut, has beautifully embossed back, arms securely rodded, and your choice of mahogany or oak finish; *regular price*, \$4.50; *special, to-day* . . . \$3.29.

Full size iron bed, $\frac{7}{8}$ inch posts, $\frac{5}{16}$ inside rods; *regular price*, \$3.75; *special, to-day* . . . \$2.29.

HARDWARE DEPT. Two new tables covered with unapproachable bargains.

A covered roasting pan with patent fastening at each end, size 12 x 16, *worth* 75c.; *special* . . . 25c.

A Christy bread knife, in three different styles, *every* one sharp, *worth* 20c.; *now* . . . 5c.

"Some one should take one of those three styles of bread knives, whet it on his boot leg, and cut the throat of liar No. 1.

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"Now for liar No. 2," warmed up Watkins:

You are always sure of the newest styles, most reliable qualities and lowest prices at our store. A great big special CORSET SALE. 900 pairs of High Grade Corsets at Half Price. \$2.00 Corsets \$1.00. \$3.00 Corsets \$1.50. \$4.00 Corsets \$2.00.

For reasons best known to themselves the makers of our corsets decided to DISTRIBUTE several thousand pairs of their corsets at FIFTY CENTS ON THE DOLLAR in different parts of the country. They selected their best and large customers to do the work. We were selected as the store in this state to distribute this state's share, which amounted to 900 pairs. We have sold the same styles during this year; they are splendid service giving corsets, in the best accepted styles . . . EVERY PAIR WARRANTED. They are boned with PERSPIRATION PROOF UNBREAKABLE STEELS, made of batiste, coutil and English brocaded materials. Many have front and side velvet grip hose supporters attached, and are neatly and elegantly finished. We thought so well of this GREAT CORSET OFFER that we were anxious to secure 2,000 pairs, but could only get our original allotment. We are VERY POSITIVE that any lady who sees these corsets, and who is a JUDGE of values, will want to secure several pairs. We URGE an EARLY inspection.

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"These 'reasons best known to themselves' seem to be that liar No. 2 has bought a job lot of corsets, for here his competitor is advertising the same brand for eighty-five cents, and says he has on hand 'a load of odds and ends in corsets on sale.'

"Now for liar No. 3 in this same small town:

SATURDAY is one of the best days for you to trade at this busy store. The others are Wednesday, Monday, Friday, Tuesday and Thursday. In other words, you cannot go wrong by trading here any day of the week, for we at all times quote prices that are fully 15 to 30 per cent lower than any store hereabouts. 'Tis because we have expert buyers in New York city every day of the year watching this store's buying interests. To-day's list of specials is of unusual interest to all classes of dry goods patrons.

SALE ON SUITS. \$14.75 for suits worth \$21.50 to \$26.50. \$19.75 for suits worth \$29.50 to \$34.50.

'Tis seldom that you have such a special suit sale opportunity. Right in the beginning of the season, when our suit stock is so thoroughly complete, so many to choose from, and every suit shown so full of fashion, newness and beauty. 'Tis a suit sale that you cannot afford to miss.

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“ Why, this man is not straight enough to name the days of the week in their proper order.

“ And then he gives baits at special hours :

TO-NIGHT, 7 to 9:30. Those crowd-bringing and crowd-pleasing prices . . . those attractive Saturday Night Specials. Elbow your way through the crowds . . . 'Twill pay you. TO-NIGHT, 7 to 9:30.

EXTRA SPECIAL, \$10.00 to \$14.50 Furs . . . \$5.95.

Fur scarfs, fur stoles, fur boas, fur muffs, fur sets, large sizes, foxes, martens, squirrels, water mink, and all kinds of new, elegant, luxurious furs; a Saturday night bargain in furs that you'll be glad to take advantage of; \$9.50 to \$14.50 values, to-night, for . . . \$5.95.

EXTRA SPECIAL, Boys' and Girls' Caps, 25c. Cloth caps, Tams, knitted toques, peaked and college caps, 50c. to 75c. values, all colors . . . 25c. Wool shawls, all colors, 25c. Large sizes knitted wool shawls, 50c. to 65c. grades . . . 25c. Childrens' Union Suits, 25c. Warm, fleeced, elegant underwear, in odds and ends, union suits and vests and pants, 45c. to 75c. grades, choice . . . 25c.

“ Cut out all of these special-hour sales, Andy, for it is just as much as to say: ‘ We'll

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give you these things cheap, but sock it to you on everything else.'

"Liar No. 4:

October 27th, 1906. Prices from new goods sale. The new goods sale still continues to grow more lively, and why shouldn't it? People are quick to take advantage where they can save from one third to one half on their purchase. Lay in your winter's supply now.

UNDERWEAR, for men, women and children. If you are looking for underwear combining quality, durability and absolute perfection, with moderate price, it will pay you well to make your fall purchases for the entire family here.

Ladies' Cotton ribbed underwear, worth 50c.; special, per garment . . . 25c.

Men's wool underwear in ribbed and plain weave, worth up to \$1.75; per garment . . . 98c.

GOLDEN RULE STORE.

"*Golden Rule!*—which being interpreted means: 'Give us a chance and we will *do you.*'

"And here cometh liar No. 5—all from one little town and on the same day:

Blue Front Clothing Co. Suits and overcoats. Special Sale.

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Made from worsted cloth, black vicuna, fancy cashmere, latest models, 1906; hand tailored, satin lined, men's top coats, long form fitting, all tailored to retail at \$20.00 and \$25.00; this sale . . . \$12.00 and \$16.50.

Remember the premiums that we are giving away free. We have added to this list some electrical novelties that are worth your attention.

An Electric Clock given away with \$35.00 worth of goods.

With 100 tickets you get the 42-piece Dinner Set.

With 80 tickets you get the Terror Alarm Clock.

You get a ticket with every 25c. purchase. Save your tickets . . . they mean money to you.

Get the habit and look for

THE BLUE FRONT CLOTHING HOUSE.

"How can all of these gay liars look people square in the face? They should every one be prosecuted for perjury," snorted Watkins.

"Well," asked the ad man, somewhat warmer, "how would you do it?"

"I'll tell you," answered the veteran salesman. "One of my friends last June, in a town up the line here, was scratching his head

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one day and wondering what sort of sale he would have. One of his neighbors was running a 'Clearance Sale,' another one a 'Midsummer Sweep,' while another had a 'Grand Reduction Sale,' and so on; and, in order to get ahead of them, he got out copy for a 'Monster Fourth of July Sale.' I said to him: 'Joe, why don't you make a GIGANTIC FAKE SALE, and say that during this fake sale you will sell a three-dollar hat for three dollars, a five-dollar ladies' waist for five dollars, and dress goods that are worth seventy-five cents a yard for seventy-five cents, and say to the people that they need not be in a hurry to come, that you will have plenty of goods whenever they come, that you have goods coming in every day?'

"'By heavens!' said my friend, 'I am just going to do that, Watkins.' And do you know, he came out with an ad that made everybody in town laugh at the ads of his competitors. He got the business, too.

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“Confidence is one thing which an advertiser should inspire.”

“Yes, you are right there,” remarked Anderson.

“And confidence is a thing that does not come in a minute, Andy. If you want to know what the best kind of advertising is, I will tell you. It is to give your customers good stuff when they come in your store. Each customer will then become a walking, talking advertisement for you, and if you can get the tongues of the people wagging your way, things will come easy for you. If you treat them right and give them good value when they come into your store, then people will believe the advertisements you print. Then the advertisement will have some effect.

“Now, when I was at home last I went one night to the Press Club banquet. I broke a young lady’s fan. Of course I wished to replace it with a good one. Did I search the papers for gorgeous Parisian caprices in fans,

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milk-fed ostrich plumes, grand-mother-of-pearl handles—'were \$15, now \$7.99'? No, I went to one of the few stores that seldom speak about how cheaply they sell goods and bought a pearl-handled fan, marked in plain figures \$7.50, without any 'reduction' business about it. I walked by several fake shops and went to a store 'they say' is *reliable*.

"Of course it is legitimate merchandising to close out straw hats after the Fourth of July at less than cost, and to sell touch-me-not styles which would make dangerous carry-overs at a sacrifice when the season is nearly past; but if you wish for your clean-up sale at these times to succeed, you must not do faking *in season* when there is no excuse for it. One of the most successful clothing merchants in America advertises: 'I sell my suits for \$10 the year around. They are worth it.'

"Now, just before I came out on this

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trip I talked with one of my customers in market. Said he: 'My advertising has no effect. I buy half a page and talk about my \$11.98 suits and nobody pays any attention to me. I've got a good notion to have a photograph of myself made with my hands before my face, put it in the papers, and say underneath: "I've been a liar long enough. I'm ashamed to look people in the face. I'm going to change now and '*make a profit*' on my goods." A man who buys a suit of clothes once or twice a year is no judge of goods. He buys where he feels he gets treated right. If I advertise I'll sell \$1 shirts "this week only for sixty-nine cents," what will the fellow think who can't buy until next week, or who bought last week for \$1, or who, when he comes in, sees the same shirt marked, maybe, fifty-nine cents? I'm tired of this kind of business; besides it don't pay.'

"I saw, the 10th of last October," continued Watkins, "the ad of a big clothing

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store which read like this: ' During our Autumn Festival Week we will place on sale our regular \$18, \$20, and \$25 overcoats for the phenomenally reduced price of \$13.50; after our Festival Week the prices will be restored to their former figures.' And then the following week this same house published another ad just as big a lie. Those were only \$13.50 coats or you may bet your life they would have asked more for them in season. It's funny how some merchants are always paying for newspaper space to say things about their goods which, were they true, would break them in one season.

" You are in business for a profit. People know this. If you think a ladies' cloak, say, is worth \$20, you are not going to mark it \$18; and if you mark it \$18, that is an evidence that you think it is worth only \$18. So why say '\$30 value for \$18'? It is not a \$30 value or you'd ask \$30 for it. Don't lie.

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"Now, I do not mean that you should not advertise that you sell goods cheaply—cheaper than the other fellow 'who pays more rent,' or that 'Andy cuts the price'—because when you go to separate people from their hard-earned coin they must feel that they will get good value for their money; but I do mean you should be on the square. I know a man who advertises 'I cut the price.' He does cut the price—that is, he sells goods cheaper than his competitors—and he gets the business.

"Then the way most of you ad men go at writing your ads shows that you are not sincere," continued Watkins, turning to Anderson's ad man. "Now, just read this stuff."

Watkins picked up a paper and read: "The Manhattan Special Women's Tailored Suits at \$15. Realizing the enormously ever-increasing demand for cleverly tailored ladies' suits at this price, we have determined,

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as always, to maintain our acknowledged supremacy in catering to the economical purchasers, and offer these exquisite sartorial conceits for the ridiculously minimized price of \$15. Your inspection solicited.'

"Now, nobody pays much attention to rot like that—nobody believes such. If that ad had read: 'We try to sell a well-tailored ladies' suit for \$15. Come and see if we don't,' it would have smacked of the truth. The man who wrote that ad thought he was smart just because he used big words, and his boss probably thought it was great stuff, because he was too ignorant to understand it.

"To be sure, merchants often buy odds and ends and short lots from wholesale houses and factories, and are really able to give good values; or often they sell nearly out of a line and wish to drop it. Then is a time for a legitimate reduction. But it would seem from most of the ads you read that the stores carry nothing but 'bargains.'

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“Nor do I see why merchants are so short-sighted that they give ‘baits.’ They may get people to come up and bite off their minnows, but they grow shy and don’t swallow the hook. The biggest store in every city is the one that either tells the truth in its advertising, or if they are all liars in that city, the biggest store is the one that carries a good quality of goods, sells them at reasonable profits only, and comes nearest to telling the truth in its ads.

“In big department stores like yours, Andy, where you require each department to make a good showing every day, and jack up the manager of a department that falls short in sales, you place a great temptation before every manager. If you are too harsh on a manager, you force him to compete against other departments in your own store, and if he stretches his statements it is your own fault. One successful store I know of will discharge a manager if he offers for

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publication an untrue ad. But there are few such stores.

"I believe firmly that there is room in every city in America for a store where they 'don't use coppers,' and don't make special sales. Such a store would succeed, because people—even the women—would learn that that store was reliable.

"*Confidence*—that's the thing.

"Now, another thing, Anderson. Do you ever stop to think that people must want things before they are going to buy them at any price? You should put something into every ad that will *create a desire*. I read the other day a little ad that I thought was a mighty good one. I cut it out; here it is:

" 'Why don't you get your lace curtains on your windows? Lovely furnishings make lovely homes. And cannot people become more lovely when they are surrounded by lovely things?' There's an ad that will make

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people think of buying curtains, and then if you will tell them about your curtains and quote prices, you will sell curtains.

“Creating a desire is a good thing to do when you advertise.

“This same man wrote another ad that looked good to me: ‘When you send your children to school, good clothes are as essential as good school books. You know that a well-dressed child takes much more interest in its studies; the teacher, too, should commence the term with good clothes. Go where you get the best values. That’s arithmetic.’

“That was a good ad, too, because it suggested that that store gave good values. Again I say, when you go to separate people from their money, you must give them good stuff.

“But above all things else, Anderson, you must not forget that although your ad is one which inspires confidence and creates a desire, it must first be *seen*.

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"Just for the fun of it, the other day I counted twenty-five pages in a magazine; eight parts of that were given to pictures, to where three parts were given to print. An ad must first catch the eye. The advertising man of an establishment that is one of the rising ones in one of the Western cities of the United States, told me this story just before I came out on this trip:

" 'I was tired,' said he, 'of not getting results from our advertising. Without saying anything to the old gentleman, who is a conservative, I had the best artist I could get to make me a drawing which would cover at least one-half of a full page. I took this drawing to the old gentleman when it was finished, and he held up his hands in holy horror. "What! are you going to waste all that money just for a picture? Why don't you say something?" Said I to him: "I have been saying something and have got no results. Let's try this." I put it in four

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papers and, do you know, it may seem a strange statement, but we jumped immediately to the first place in ladies' made-up stuff in our city, and we have been there ever since. Pictures help.' "

The ad man smiled. "Do you know," said he, "I used to work in New York for ——'s department store. One day the head ad man was away, and the manager of the store asked me to get up a small ad. He left it to me. I got made an enlarged drawing of our store, and then, you might say, put the ad in small type in the windows of our store as it appeared on the page. When the manager saw the ad—a whole page—one costing several hundred dollars to run it—he was wild, because I 'vasted so moch space.' But it was near press time and the ad had to go. The following Monday the store had the biggest day ever. The ad was *seen*."

"And," put in Watkins, "it made talk."

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"You are right there," answered the ad man. "I know one big store in New York that changed their ad man; they'll go down sure. The new ad man boasted to me one day that he was going to save the firm hundreds of thousands of dollars each year that had theretofore been 'wasted in bill boards, mailing lists, and mere publicity advertising.' Because of publicity that firm grew rapidly, and if they stop their stroke they won't skim along so fast.

"Prices are O. K., but there must also be publicity."

Anderson stepped out for a few minutes.

"Don't swear at us, Mr. Watkins," continued the ad man, "there's many a rock in the road the ad man must travel. Mr. Anderson lets me alone, but some close-fisted proprietor, who doesn't know the difference between a comma and a coal bucket, usually stands in the way of the ad man, who, you know, is as important to a business as all of

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the department managers put together. If something new comes along or the ad man thinks up something novel, the old man instead of letting the ad man take up a new idea wants to 'let well enough alone,' or 'der odder feller doan do dot,' until the ad man, his plans crushed daily, finally becomes little more than a pair of scissors, a paste brush, and a phonograph—always grinding out 'was \$2.50, now \$1.69.'

"I'm very glad to have had you talk with the old man, Mr. Watkins," continued the ad man. "You'll pardon me for having kept mum. That's the way a young man learns. Now I want to ask you just one question:

"In a nutshell, you believe that the first thing an ad should do is to *attract attention*; the second thing it should do is to *create a desire*; and the third and important thing is that the ad should *inspire confidence*."

"Yes, you have put my ideas into just a few words," said Watkins.

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"Now tell me," asked the ad man, "how can I write an ad so as to inspire this confidence—how can I make people believe what I say?"

"That is easy," answered Watkins; "tell them the truth."

CHAPTER XI

WHAT BECAME OF JOHN

YOUNG J. C. fought his own on the road for two years, actually earning his living by selling goods. One day, while at Portland, Ore., he received a telegram telling him to come home, that his father was very sick. He went back at once to Chicago. He found his father stricken with paralysis and unable ever to return to his office work; yet the old gentleman's mind was as clear and active as ever.

One evening the father and son sat together on the front porch of their home. They were alone.

"John, my boy," began the father, "I'm proud of your record. You have made of

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yourself so far all that your mother and I have hoped for from you. Nowadays so many sons of well-to-do parents are no count. Yes, son, we are proud of you.

“They tell me I’ll never be back at my post again, but I chuckle every time they tell me this, because I know I will be, and for a good many years to come—in you. That’s why we are so proud of you. But let me tell you something: You’ll have to hustle to keep up the speed your old dad did.”

When young John was growing up he had always sought to dodge a talk from the Governor. But after he had spent a few years of running the point of his plow into live roots, as he broke new ground in business, he began to learn that the old gentleman could teach him something. In time he hung upon every chance he had to listen to the business wisdom of his father. Experience teaches. The bald head knows more than the one that still has fuzz clinging to its temples. So this

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evening the son listened with eager ear to his father.

“Yes, sir, son, hard work will do more toward putting you ahead than anything else. When apples are ripe a breeze may once in a while knock one off, but if you want to fill your basket, you must climb the tree and shake a limb.

“Not only must you work hard but you must keep on working hard. Stay-with-it wins. You can’t split a sappy hickory log with a toy hatchet at one stroke; but if you keep on swinging a big ax you’ll lay her open.

“You may have to put in a few wedges, too, and maul on them. And you’ll often find that one light lick with a maul on a small wedge will do more splitting than a dozen hard blows with an ax even. Diplomacy will often do a thing easily. When I was a boy I went squirrel hunting one day with a fellow named Jim Hudson. The dog treed

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a squirrel. The squirrel was in a hollow. Do you suppose Jim cut down that tree? No. He got a few dry leaves, put them at the bottom of the hollow, lit them with a match, and smoked the squirrel out.

"It's all right to smoke out squirrels, but if you must chop a tree, chop her. Jim was a lazy fellow, and would have walked seven miles for a piece of punk and a flint rather than chop down that tree in half the time.

"Some men depend upon an occasional brilliant flash to keep them up; but the man who gets there is the man who keeps on making the sparks fly.

"Never slacken in your integrity. Character counts. You'll never profit from one transaction with a man. The one-bill getters on the road are no good to a firm; and these one-bill firms don't last long. One of our old customers told me the last day I was at the store that he liked to buy goods from our firm

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because he knew the stuff we shipped would be up to sample.

“ Another thing: don't want it all. No man can get ahead by what he does alone, and he can't get others to do it for him unless he pays them well. The most successful firm I know of is a wholesale shoe house. Every time the head of that firm gets hold of a good hustler he asks him to take stock in that house. They began this long ago, and if I had had my way about it, I would have begun this long, long ago in our house. Don't think people will work for you just because they like you. They like the jingle of silver in their pockets better.

“ Keep on keeping sober, son. The plans a man makes when a high-ball makes him pipe dream, he does not often put into the shop when high-ball quits work. You can get drunk on whims, too, as easily as you can on high-balls. Do well the thing you have to do instead of dreaming of some-

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thing else to do. You can't dig potatoes and pluck peaches at the same time. Besides, Irish potatoes will look better to you than a peach, if you have planted and plowed them well yourself. The successful man in the shoe business sees beauty in an old shoe that has worn well. I once heard a man say: 'I got out the prettiest raft of saw logs this season I ever did.' I knew he was a successful man.

"And when you get anything, son, pray keep it. There's no use of being a honey bee one day and a house fly the next. Too many people make honey for others to devour. A man who works hard is entitled to first get his bill into his own honey-combs. If he doesn't begin doing this when he is young, he will never have any honey for others.

"You now have, son, a good foundation on which to build a fortune for yourself and to be an influential man in the world. The man who has wealth can do a great deal of

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good in the world. Not so much by dropping dimes into the cups of professional beggars, but by making employment for people who want to work and by making their condition better. I had, to start with, nothing but a want-to-work. By practicing what I've preached to you to-night I've become the managing and the financial head of our house, of which, to-morrow, when our stockholders meet, you shall become president. Watkins, who spent so many years on the road for us, shall be your 'assistant,' and when you become capable of doing as much good work as he does, you shall draw as much salary as he does. Are you not glad now that you took your post graduate course in the School of Hustle? "

(1)

THE END



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